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Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Note by the Secretary-General*

The General Assembly, at its fifty-fifth session, adopted resolution 55/130 on the work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, in which, among other matters, it requested the Special Committee:

(a) Pending complete termination of the Israeli occupation, to continue to investigate Israeli policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, especially Israeli lack of compliance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and to consult, as appropriate, with the International Committee of the Red Cross according to its regulations in order to ensure that the welfare and human rights of the peoples of the occupied territories are safeguarded and to report to the Secretary-General as soon as possible and whenever the need arises thereafter;

(b) To submit regularly to the Secretary-General periodic reports on the current situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem;

(c) To continue to investigate the treatment of prisoners in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967.

The Special Committee, as in previous years, reports to the General Assembly through the Secretary-General.

* In accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/222, section III, paragraph 10, this report has been submitted on 3 October 2001 so as to include as much updated information as possible.

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The attached periodic report of the Special Committee contains a summary of articles appearing in *Ha'aretz* (Hebrew-language daily) and the *Jerusalem Post* (English-language daily) over the period from 1 August 2000 to 30 April 2001.

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Situation of human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories: Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem

A. Conditions that are restrictive with respect to Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem

1. Land

1. On 15 August 2000, it was reported that the first seven months of 2000 had seen a total of 1,816 plots of land in the settlements being put up for sale, accounting for some 13 per cent of the building in the country and three times the level of the construction carried out in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa. According to figures which Meretz Party Knesset member Mussi Raz had obtained from the Israel Land Administration, 1,366 of the properties had been put on the market in line with recommendations by the Housing and Construction Ministry, 339 had gone on sale via tenders, while no tenders had been issued on the remaining 111 properties. The figures also showed that since the beginning of July 2000, when National Religious Party Knesset member Yitzhak Levy resigned as housing and construction minister, no properties in the settlements had gone on the market. Raz said that the figures thus illustrated just how much damage the former minister had caused the Government. The National Religious Party, however, claims the figures show how good and effective Levy was for the State, carrying out the vital development and settlement of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank). In related news, a clerk in the Prime Minister's Office responded to reports that former residents of Mitzpe Hagit would soon be allowed to return to the houses evacuated a year ago, saying that they, and residents of Mitzpe Erez, were allowed to do so as part of the agreement signed between the Prime Minister and the Yesha Council of Settlements once the permits were finalized. He added that the permit for residents to return to Mitzpe Hagit was nearly completed and was currently being dealt with by the Civil Administration. Within a matter of weeks, said the clerk, the matter would be resolved. (*Ha'aretz*, 15 August)

2. On 21 September, it was reported that the High Court of Justice asked the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) to see whether they could find a way to stop using a road that went through the West Bank village of El Akba, which had been declared a closed military zone for more than two decades. The hearing was in response to a petition submitted by residents of the village and sponsored by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI). When the petition was first submitted, the army had been carrying out live ammunition exercises near the village, as a result of which six residents were killed and 38 wounded. According to the State, however, the last accident had occurred in 1996. Since then, the army had declared El Akba a "dry training" area, where live ammunition was barred. It had also ordered soldiers to stay away from the houses and keep to the main road which bisected the village on the way from the army base to the firing grounds. ACRI attorney Netta Amar told the court that those changes were not enough. The villagers wanted the army to keep off the road, so that El Akba would no longer be considered a closed military zone and would be able to develop normally. "Why should the entire village be paralysed because of one road?" Amar said. "As it is, the soldiers can no longer train near the houses. Is there any justification to still hold on to the village and cause it to be declared a closed military zone?" The court had given the State 45 days to complete its arguments on the petition and another 30 days for the petitioners to reply. It would then hand down its verdict without another hearing. (*Jerusalem Post*, 21 September)

3. On 14 February 2001, it was reported that under infantry covering fire and using heavily armoured bulldozers, IDF had begun the previous day ripping up hundreds of dunams of Palestinian orchards abutting the Gaza Strip border fence. Senior officers said they intended to create a 200-metre-wide "dead zone" along the fence to make it more difficult for terrorists to set up ambushes. Throughout the morning, the bulldozers had ripped up orange orchards along the fence between Nahal Oz and Beit Hanun on the north-eastern corner of the Strip. Soldiers guarding the bulldozers had periodically opened fire at the brush to deter would-be attackers. Military sources said that IDF will be clearing trees and brush along the whole 57-kilometre border wherever a security threat was perceived. "We aren't just plowing up the orchards for our good health. We are doing it to reduced the threat to our troops", said an officer in the Southern Command. (*Jerusalem Post*, 14 February)

4. On 9 April, it was reported that an Israeli-Canadian, Neta Golan, and a German of Palestinian descent, Yasmin Khaial, had been arrested on Friday, 6 April 2001, while protesting the uprooting of olive trees in the village of Deir Istiya in the West Bank. The High Court had allowed IDF to uproot the trees in order to pave a road through the olive grove. IDF, however, had got permission to uproot fewer trees than it had wanted. Stones had been thrown from behind the trees at Israeli cars several times, the IDF spokesman said. (*Ha'aretz*, 9 April)

2. Housing

5. On 14 August 2000, two houses in East Jerusalem were destroyed following a court order by the Jerusalem Municipality. The two houses had been built the previous year and were empty. The order for the destruction of the houses had been issued although Minister for Jerusalem Affairs Haim Ramon and the Jerusalem municipal authorities had held talks on the issue. Ramon had not been informed of the municipality's decision. The homes belonged to Jamal Kark and Muhammad Tawil, and they were destroyed because they were in the path of plans for the construction of the eastern ring road of Jerusalem. The decision to raze the houses had been brought to the attention of city council member Meir Margalit (Meretz), who contacted the director-general of the municipality, Ra'anan Dinor. Dinor informed Margalit that the city had no intention of carrying out the court orders. Others at the municipality confirmed that the city did not intend to raze the homes. However, Israel Ben Ari, the man in charge of the house demolitions at the municipality, said that the intention was to destroy the two homes. Arik Asherman, of the Israeli Committee against House Demolitions, alleged that the city hall had knowingly diverted their attention so that they would not prevent the destruction of the building by getting in touch with the Office of Jerusalem Affairs, headed by Ramon. (*Ha'aretz*, 15 August)

6. On 29 August, it was reported that three homes had been demolished in Shufat, a refugee camp near Jerusalem. The demolition had been carried out by Israeli police and special forces. (*Ha'aretz*, 30 August)

7. On 5 February 2001, it was reported that the IDF bulldozers the previous day had razed "deserted buildings" in an area allegedly used by Palestinians for launching terror attacks against soldiers and Israeli settlers travelling on the road along the Karni-Netzarim settlements. According to Palestinian sources, the army had destroyed six homes belonging to six brothers in Mantar in the eastern part of the Gaza Strip. Some 50 family members lived in the houses. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 5 February)

8. On 14 February, it was reported that in a move aimed at boosting the population of Jerusalem, the Knesset the previous day had approved a law giving grants of NIS 80,000 for apartment purchases or additions in the city. Under the new law, anyone eligible for government housing subsides who buys an apartment in Jerusalem will get an extra grant of NIS 60,000 to NIS 80,000. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 14 February)

9. On 18 February, it was reported that near Rafah, in the Gaza Strip, Israeli security forces had evacuated seven homes on the border between Israel and Egypt and razed them, claiming that shooting aimed at Israeli troops had come from the houses. Palestinian sources said that more than 15 families living in the homes had been left without shelter as a result. (*Ha'aretz*, 18 February)

10. On 21 February, it was reported that the Israeli "civil administration" had demolished illegally constructed buildings at the edge of Route 60 in Beit Umar and El Aroub, the site of the fatal shooting of Dr. Shmuel Gillis three weeks earlier as he was driving home to Karmei Tzur settlement. Captain Peter Lerner of the "Judea and Samaria Civil Administration" said the structures had been built without permits, but Israeli security officials said the demolitions had been carried out to enhance the security of Israelis travelling on the road. Rabbi Arik Ascherman of Rabbis for Human Rights expressed concern that officials might take advantage of the security situation and accelerate the demolition of more homes. Ascherman said the families whose homes had been demolished claimed they had not received any advance notification. (*Jerusalem Post*, 21 February)

11. On 1 March, it was reported that near Ramallah, IDF bulldozers had demolished an illegally built structure in Rifat, the village near which a few days earlier Palestinian gunmen had ambushed a van, seriously wounding a woman. The army said the building had been destroyed because it had been built without a permit. Military sources said the structure might have been used as cover for the gunmen. The

Palestinians said it was a random act of vengeance for the shootings. (*Jerusalem Post*, 1 March)

12. On 14 March, it was reported that two illegal structures had been demolished in the village of Beit Umar. A village resident said soldiers had demolished a single-story home that had recently been completed and was owned by Waji Abu Malia, adding that Malia had received notification of the demolition two weeks before. Civil administration officials said two illegal structures had been demolished, one consisting of pillars and a roof, and an animal pen. (*Jerusalem Post*, 14 March)

13. On 5 April, it was reported that Rabbi Arik Ascherman of Rabbis for Human Rights, also a member of the Israel Committee against House Destruction, had been arrested the previous day as he tried to halt Civil Administration bulldozers from destroying the house of Salim Shawarma in Anata, which had previously been destroyed by the Civil Administration and rebuilt by its owner. In addition to the house, the army had destroyed another 19 illegal buildings the previous day in East Jerusalem and near Hebron. According to the Civil Administration, most of the buildings had been empty and were not serving as dwellings. (*Ha'aretz*, 5 April)

14. On 15 April, it was reported that between the start of the year and 22 March 2001 Jerusalem Municipality had issued 21 orders to destroy buildings erected without permits in the city. Two of the condemned structures were in Givat Shaul, in West Jerusalem, and the rest were in the eastern part of the city and the owners were Palestinians. Most of the orders had been issued in March. They were administrative orders, enabling the municipal authorities to carry out the demolitions within 30 days of the document's delivery to the family, and without the involvement of any legal process. According to Meir Margalit, the Meretz representative on the Municipal Council, the municipality was planning to execute a number of the orders the following day and demolish five homes in Um Tuva. However, in an interview with Army Radio, the Jerusalem Municipality spokesman denied any plans to carry out the demolition orders in the near future. Five homes at Um Tuva are currently strategically situated on the planned eastern ring road of the capital. If they are destroyed soon, the construction of the road can proceed, while any delay might result in a legal clash which may put off plans for the ring road. The other Palestinian homes on line for demolition were situated in Bet Hanina, Shuafat, Ras al-Amud, Tzur Bahar, Wadi Juz and Abu Tur. One of the homes scheduled for demolition, belonging to the Akl family, and situated on French Hill, had been postponed by the Jerusalem District Court, "pending a different decision". (*Ha'aretz*, 15 April)

3. Settlements

15. On 20 August 2000, it was reported that two Jewish families would soon move into Beit Versa site in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. Renovations had been completed in the enclave over the past year to make it fit to accommodate three additional Jewish families. To date two families had been living at the site. A fifth family was expected to settle at Beit Versa in another two months, bringing the total to 15 Jewish families settled in this part of the Muslim Quarter. In total, close to 60 Jewish families currently were living in the Quarter, and if the number of yeshivas and other religious facilities as well as Jewish-owned stores were counted, about 1,000 Jews were living, studying and working in the Muslim Quarter. For months, exploratory excavation work had been carried out in the Quarter's Beit Hatzelem area, close to Herod's Gate, in preparation for a construction project which the ultra-Orthodox Ateret Kohanim group wished to sponsor. The project would create housing for another 20 Jewish families. (*Ha'aretz*, 20 August)

16. On 21 August, it was reported that, of the outposts on a list of those in the West Bank whose development had been frozen in an agreement between the Yesha Council and Prime Minister Ehud Barak, 64 per cent had been expanded in the previous year. Those findings were part of a routine follow-up carried out by Peace Now. In addition, according to the findings the group had published the previous day, only half the outposts that were supposed to be evacuated had actually been removed. The Yesha Council secretary-general responded that there are agreements between him, IDF and the Prime Minister that Peace Now was unaware of. Following his election in 1999, a form of agreement had been worked out between Barak and the settlers under which 17 per cent of the new outposts built outside the settlements would not be expanded. Peace Now stated that in 11 of the 17 outposts theoretically frozen, additional structures had been built and only 4 of the 8 outposts that were supposed to

be evacuated had actually been removed. (*Ha'aretz*, 21 August)

17. On 22 August, it was reported that the first quarter of 2000 had seen an 81 per cent increase in construction in the settlements, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics. The figures showed that in the first three months of the current year, work had begun on 1,000 new buildings, compared to 550 in the corresponding quarter of 1999. The greatest increase had been in private construction, which had risen by 141 per cent (410 units in the first quarter of 2000, compared to 170 the previous quarter). Construction work on public buildings had increased by 55 per cent (590 new buildings compared to 380 in the previous quarter). The increases corresponded to Ehud Barak's rise to power; in May and July 1999, construction work had begun on 720 new buildings in the settlements. Former Housing Minister Yitzhak Levy (National Religious Party) seemed to have helped to protect the interests of the settlers. The Prime Minister bore most of the burden of responsibility, since, despite his clear promises, he did not alter the map of the national priority zone, said Gabi Lasky, the general-secretary of the Peace Now movement. In contrast to the 1992 elections when Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had altered the national priority zones, Barak has left in place those set by his predecessor, Binyamin Netanyahu. Under the current maps, most settlements enjoyed the status of Priority Zone A and thus were entitled to considerable housing and construction benefits, of which private contractors reaped most of the rewards. (*Ha'aretz*, 22 August)

18. On 12 September, it was reported that construction in the settlements had increased by 96 per cent during the first half of the year, according to figures from the Housing and Construction Ministry. The figures, released the day before by Knesset member Mussi Raz (Meretz), showed that work had begun on 1,067 residential units in the first six months of 2000, compared to 545 units during the same period in 1999. The statistics showed that construction was under way on 860 residential units in the settlements in the Jerusalem district and on 270 units in other settlements around the country. Since Ehud Barak's government had taken office in July 1999, ground had been broken on 1,924 residential units in the settlements (1,384 in the Jerusalem district and 540 elsewhere), as opposed to 1,845 in 1998 and 1,160 in 1997. Raz attacked the tender issued the day before for 80 living units in Har Adar. (*Ha'aretz*, 12 September)

19. On 27 September, it was reported that, as of the end of 1999, about 56 per cent of Jerusalem residents lived in parts of the city annexed in 1967 according to the statistical yearbook published the previous day by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies. Some 46 per cent of the residents of those parts of the city were Jews, representing 38 per cent of the city's total Jewish population, according to the yearbook. (*Ha'aretz*, 27 September)

20. On 10 October, it was reported that a wave of violence by Jewish settlers against Palestinians had surged over the weekend, especially in the northern parts of the West Bank. On the night of 7 October, a 23-year-old Palestinian man, Mustafa Abu Baker, from Bidia, had been killed by gunfire on the trans-Samaria highway, near his village. Bidia residents insisted that Abu Baker could have been saved had rescue ambulances not been detained en route to collect him. Jewish residents impeded the ambulance's arrival, the residents claimed. Palestinian officials appealed to the International Committee of the Red Cross, demanding that Israel not obstruct ambulances. In related news, the body of a Palestinian man was found in the West Bank near Ramallah. Ali Ishak, 25, of the village of Azun, was found with gunshot wounds to his head. Palestinians blamed Jewish settlers for the killings. However, Israeli officials expressed doubts about this allegation and complained that Palestinians had in recent days disseminated lies and misinformation about acts of murder allegedly perpetrated by Jewish settlers. A 70-year-old man, Abd El-Rahman Nafaa, from the village of Zawiyeh near Nablus, had reportedly been beaten by settlers over the previous weekend. Settlers had recently attacked seven villages in the Nablus region, firing bullets, smashing windows and damaging house facades, a Palestinian source claimed. In the previous year, a settler revenge patrol had operated in Nablus and northern West Bank regions, sponsoring attacks against Arab property in reprisal for terror strikes against Jews. (*Ha'aretz*, 10 October)

21. On 27 October, it was reported that IDF was planning to spend NIS 25 million on bolstering the defence of the settlements in the West Bank following a decision by the Finance Ministry the day before to grant the necessary funds. A senior military source told *Ha'aretz* that the Central Command had decided to

spend the money on "aspects of security that could serve to protect lives". (*Ha'aretz*, 27 October)

22. On 30 October, it was reported that the Jerusalem Municipality intended to discuss a project for the construction of an additional 4,000 housing units in the settlement of Har Homa. The area in question lies along the south-eastern border of the city and is adjacent to the Palestinian village of Beit Sahur. The plan, titled Har Homa B, was part of a Housing Ministry initiative to be implemented on land confiscated from Palestinians. The project would be presented on 3 November to a subcommission of a local planning and construction committee, which would also discuss the construction of a new Jewish neighbourhood between Gilo and Har Homa involving 400 residential units to be built by private entrepreneurs. In addition, the local planning committee was to deliberate the construction of a new 64-dunam Jewish neighbourhood in Abu Dis. The proposed site was linked to the Palestinian village of Abu Dis, which falls under Area B (Israeli security control, Palestinian civil management). (*Ha'aretz*, 30 October)

23. On 2 November, it was reported that police were investigating Palestinian claims that settlers from Yitzhar had shot and wounded two Palestinians harvesting olives in a grove in the village of Urif, south of the settlement, the day before. According to Palestinian reports, 36-year-old Salah Safdi and 19-year-old Said Abdel Khadi were working in the fields when the settlers shot them. Shortly after the incident, IDF claimed it had no knowledge of the matter. However, army officers pointed out that there had been almost daily reports of confrontation between Palestinians and settlers in the region. Tensions were high in the area, owing to a mosque in Hawarah that had been set on fire by settlers, and also the incident concerning the two settlers from Itamar who had shot at Palestinians in Beit Furik, killing one. (*Jerusalem Post*, 2 November)

24. On 8 November, it was reported that the IDF brigade commander in Hebron had apologized to the family of a Palestinian man who had been left paralysed in his lower body after being struck in the head by a bullet fired from a Jewish settlement. The man, Ibrahim Abu Turki, 60, of Qalqis, was riding home on his donkey when he came under fire from the settlement of Haggai on 13 October 2000. There were no clashes between Palestinians and Israeli forces or Jewish settlers at the time. Abu Turki was treated at a hospital in Saudi Arabia and his family was told that his chances of a full recovery were very slim. (*Ha'aretz*, 8 November)

25. On 27 November, it was reported that settlers from the Gush Katif settlements in the Gaza Strip had taken over 10 allegedly deserted buildings along the shore at Kfar Yam, with a view to establishing a permanent encampment at the Gush Katif junction and additional sites. Since the previous week's shooting attacks, many old shacks and uninhabited buildings at the Gush Katif junction had been destroyed and shrubs and trees had been uprooted to allow soldiers a clear view of both sides of the road. "We plan to inhabit every possible place", said Itzik Eliah, deputy head of the Gaza Coast Regional Council. In related news, it was reported that the settlement of Kfar Darom in the Gush Katif settlements area was still in the process of screening new families. Plans for a new neighbourhood to be built on a 100-dunam (25-acre) plot fenced in following a terror attack, where four caravans had been placed, were under way. The settlement was also speeding up earlier construction plans for housing. (*Jerusalem Post*, 27 November)

26. On 5 December, it was reported that the estimated cost of dismantling some 60 per cent of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and compensating their inhabitants would be about US$ 3.5 billion, according to a report released the previous day by Peace Now. The group's Settlement Watch project showed that since Prime Minister Ehud Barak had taken office, work had begun on 2,830 housing units in the settlements and tenders had been issued for 3,500 more — about the same rate as under the previous Government of Binyamin Netanyahu. The group rejected Barak's plan to create large settlement blocs under Israeli sovereignty and dismantle smaller communities as part of a peace agreement with the Palestinians, calling such a plan unworkable. "There can be no agreement that does not take us back to the 1967 borders", Peace Now spokesman Didi Remez said, "and in order to do this we must dismantle most if not all the Israeli settlements." "Priority number one must be the dismantling of the 16 Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip, where 6,500 Israelis live on the edge of one million Palestinians", Peace Now activist Amiram Goldblum said. "The next step must be the dismantling of the settlements in the West Bank, starting with those near the Palestinian population centres." According to

the group, approximately 200,000 Israelis live in 130 settlements across the West Bank, amidst 2 million Palestinians. Peace Now averred that as many as 60 per cent of the settlers lived in their suburban communities for non-ideological reasons. (*Jerusalem Post*, 5 December)

27. On 10 December, it was reported that in Hebron, tensions raged after a few dozen Kiryat Arba residents blocked the roads to Palestinians and took over a Givat Harsina building they claimed had been built on their land. Palestinians said the house belonged to the Jaber family. IDF refrained from taking any action at first, but the Palestinians soon clashed with the Israelis, and a Palestinian boy, Mansur Jaber, 13, was shot in the abdomen. The boy's father told Army Radio that settlers had shot his son as he opened the door to the house. IDF said that police and the army were investigating the incident. Late the previous night, the settlers were still in the two-story building. (*Jerusalem Post*, 10 December)

28. On 2 January, it was reported that earlier in the day, settlers in the Binyamin region had blocked access roads from Arab villages to the highway, preventing Palestinians from travelling in private vehicles. (*Jerusalem Post*, 2 May)

29. On 19 February, it was reported that preliminary plans to build 1,000 homes near Bat Ayin in Gush Etzion's settlements (near Bethlehem) had been approved the previous day by the Jewish Agency's settlement division, the first step in a process that still requires the approval of the Defence Ministry and the cabinet. Captain Peter Lerner, spokesman for the civil administration in the territories, noted that the settlement division had the authority to plan for land under its control, but could not approve construction. Once the division had authorized the plans, the civil administration checked the area to ensure the land was not in dispute, then passed the application on for Defence Ministry approval, he said. Didi Remez, spokesman for Peace Now, said that "construction in the settlements is a violent act that only invites further violence and is one of the main components of the loss of faith in government policy and security today". "The project also proves false the myth of natural growth which is stipulated in the guidelines of the national unity government still being established. The project will double the 'natural growth' of Bat Ayin", Remez said. (*Jerusalem Post*, 19 November)

30. On 19 March, it was reported that the Jerusalem Municipality planning and construction committee was expected to approve the second stage of construction of the controversial Har Homa neighbourhood on the south-eastern edge of Jerusalem. The plan, calling for the building of an additional 3,000 housing units in the neighbourhood, would still be subject to the approval of the regional committee, before the Ministry of Construction and Housing decided whether and when to issue tenders for construction. The first stage of the neighbourhood, some 2,400 units, was to be completed during the summer. But left-wing politicians and advocacy groups, which had opposed the construction of the neighbourhood through its on-again, off-again history over the past decade, said yesterday that it was clearer than ever that this was not the time or place for building. "It is absurd that the committee should go ahead with the approval of this [new] construction when we see that the original construction has been slowed down due to the violence and shooting in the area", said Pepe Alalu, head of the Meretz faction on the City Council. Alalu, who said apartment sales in the first stage of the plan "were virtually frozen" since the intifada had broken out the previous September, called the expected approval of the plan "absurd", since "we see that almost no one wants to move there". (*Jerusalem Post*, 19 March)

31. On 22 March, it was reported that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had revealed in a wide-ranging discussion with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, the previous day that Israel's rationale behind building Har Homa was to prevent the merging of Bethlehem with East Jerusalem neighbourhoods, something that would make it impossible to ever draw a border there. Sharon said, "I told him that there is nothing new there, and that it is just a continuation of construction. I told him that to draw a border in a built-up area between two Palestinian areas is almost impossible, and that the decision 10 years ago to build the neighbourhood in Har Homa flowed from the need to prevent a contiguous Palestinian connection between Bethlehem and Beit Sahur, and Sur Baher and other neighbourhoods [in East Jerusalem.], because once the two [areas] touch, there will be no possibility of drawing a border, and it will be the focus of disputes." (*Jerusalem Post*, 22 March)

32. On 5 April, it was reported that Atzmona, the Gaza settlement where a 15-month-old boy had been wounded by a mortar bomb, would get a

NIS 1.5 million investment from the Ministry of Housing and Construction. Minister Natan Sharansky told reporters after a working meeting with Aharon Tzur, chair of the Coastal Gaza Regional Authority, that the money would be invested in building a Talmud Torah school, a community centre, and a pre-army school. (*Ha'aretz*, 5 April)

33. On 6 April, it was reported that the Housing and Construction Ministry had published the previous day tenders for the construction of another 700 homes in the West Bank. The tenders were for 496 units in Ma'aleh Adumin, near Jerusalem, and 212 units in Alfei Menasheh, west of Qalqilya. "In recent days, we saw how important it is to lend a hand and support the citizens who were sent by the Israeli Government to settle the territories ... This expansion is necessary because of the natural growth in these towns", Housing and Construction Minister Natan Sharansky said the previous day. (*Ha'aretz*, 6 April)

34. On 10 April, it was reported that plans by the Housing Ministry to market plots for the construction of 5,000 homes in the West Bank in 2001 were drawing fire from foreign Governments. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres reiterated government policy that no new settlements would be built and that all new settlement activity would only be in response to the "natural growth needs" of the communities. The Ministry's plans required approval by the Defence Ministry, which had just approved the previous week a plan by Housing Minister Natan Sharansky for another 700 housing units in Ma'aleh Adumim and Alfei Menasheh, and by the Government. The Ministry's proposed sales would be in existing settlements, in accordance with the coalition's guidelines, which explicitly stated that no new settlements would be built during the current administration. Israel Lands Administration data showed that during 2000, the Ministry had sold plots for the construction of 2,800 homes in the West Bank, generating government revenues of NIS 70 million. And the current year's sales target was 78 per cent higher than the previous year's. The largest project was at Ma'aleh Adumim, where plots for 1,328 homes were on sale. In Givat Ze'ev, 921 homes were planned, and in Givat Benyamin, east of Neveh Ya'akov, there were plans for 388 homes. In the direction of Gush Etzion, 594 units were slated for Upper Beitar and 414 plots were marked for sale in Beitar. In Efrat, plots for 340 units were to be sold. The Housing Ministry said that available plots in Efrat were expected to run out soon. To ease the shortage, a new town called Gva'ot was planned, which would include 6,000 homes. In Samaria, plots for 200 homes were to be sold in Karnei Shomron and 650 in Ariel. As in Alfei Menasheh, several tenders in Ariel had found no buyers due to low demand. Officials of the United States of America had been saying for some time that at least 20,000 housing units in the West Bank were empty, suggesting there was no need for new housing units. (*Ha'aretz*, 10 April)

35. On 27 April, it was reported that several government ministries had approved additional benefits and development budgets for the Gush Katif settlements in Gaza in recent weeks, due to both the serious security situation in Gaza and the Sharon government's policy that no settlement should be evacuated under any future agreement. Defence Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer approved the completion of the construction of 14 houses in Dugit that had been frozen under the Barak Government. Currently, the settlement's 14 families resided in caravans. In addition, Agriculture Minister Shalom Simchon had agreed to grant the settlements of Pe'at Sadeh and Rafiah Yam increased agricultural aid. An inter-ministerial committee approved NIS 13 million for the construction of synagogues in Gazan settlements. Finally, a contract had been signed for the construction of a school in Atzmona, while the Education Ministry had approved funds for the construction of another school in Netzarim. (*Ha'aretz*, 27 April)

4. Roads

36. On 21 September, it was reported that owners of land in the south-east Jerusalem villages of Sur Bahir and Suwahara had recently received letters from the Jerusalem Municipality informing them that their land would be expropriated for a public purpose, the paving of the eastern ring road. Residents of Wadi Kadum and Ras al Amud were expected to receive similar letters soon. A total of more than 100 residents were to receive expropriation orders in the coming days. No political battle was expected to develop over the expropriations, which had been planned for some time, but some residents were expected to fight for a more attractive compensation package. The lands were currently defined as "green areas" and were far less expensive than areas where building was permitted. Jerusalem City Council member Meir Margalit

(Meretz) said that "everyone knows that these properties are used for construction and that the 'green' status is the result of political considerations which were meant to limit the presence of Arabs in the city. An independent assessor must thus be appointed who will set the price of the land according to real property prices on lands slated for construction." The opposition members of the City Council are demanding that landowners who cannot prove via official documents that they own the land also be compensated since the land has been in their families for years, even though they are not listed with the land registrar. "They must be treated as property owners", said Margalit. Significant numbers of Arab landowners who have had their property expropriated have refused to accept compensation from the Israeli Government, some because of nationalistic beliefs, and some because they feared that they and their families would be targeted by nationalists. To prevent this, the opposition members want a trust fund set up where the compensation refused by families would be deposited. "The money will be kept for the family", said Margalit, "until the political conditions allow the family to accept the funds." Meretz Knesset member Mussi Raz said that since the new road will pass close to land likely to be handed over to the Palestinian Authority, "the road should be coordinated with the Palestinian Authority. If there is no chance of reaching an agreement, construction of the road should be frozen until a peace agreement is signed. (*Ha'aretz*, 21 September)

37. On 21 November, it was reported that the day before, the Israeli army had blocked the Kisufim-Gush Katif Road connecting the northern and southern parts of the Gaza Strip, preventing thousands of Palestinians from the south who worked or studied in the north from getting home. IDF was considering blocking another major artery in Gaza, the Karni-Netzarim road, to Palestinian traffic. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 21 November)

38. On 10 December, it was reported that in Hebron, tensions raged after a few dozen Kiryat Arba residents blocked the roads to Palestinians and took over a Givat Harsina building they claimed had been built on their land. Palestinians said the house belonged to the Jaber family. IDF refrained from taking any action at first, but the Palestinians soon clashed with the Israelis, and a Palestinian boy, Mansur Jaber, 13, was shot in the abdomen. The boy's father told Army Radio that settlers had shot his son as he opened the door to the house. IDF said that police and the army were investigating the incident. Late the previous night the settlers were still in the two-story building. (*Jerusalem Post*, 10 December)

39. On 13 December, it was reported that a group of angry settlers had blocked roads near Kedumim, at the Bekaot junction, and in the Gush Etzion area, halting Palestinian traffic. The settlers charged that despite the IDF "blockade" on villages in the West Bank, Palestinians continued to travel freely and carry out attacks. (*Jerusalem Post*, 13 December)

40. On 6 April 2001, it was reported that Israeli bulldozers had started carving a road through Palestinian land belonging to Ein Yabroud and Bitin, to connect Beit El directly to the Nablus-Jerusalem road. (*Ha'aretz*, 6 April)

5. Identity cards, travel permits

41. On 8 August 2000, border police prevented Palestinian Authority Minister for Jerusalem Affairs Faisal Husseini and some 200 Palestinian businessmen who were visiting from abroad from entering the Palestinian Chamber of Commerce in Jerusalem, where they were planning to hold their annual meeting on investment in East Jerusalem and the Palestinian areas. Some 30 to 40 border policemen blocked the entrance to the building and pushed back the businessmen who tried to enter. Israeli officials said that they had blocked the conference because it had been organized by the Palestinian Authority and interim peace treaties banned Palestinian Authority activities in Jerusalem until the future of the city was resolved in a final-status peace agreement. (*Jerusalem Post*, 9 August)

42. On 5 December, it was reported that Brigadier-General Tawfik Tirawi, head of the Palestinian Authority General Intelligence Apparatus in the West Bank, would be unable to leave Ramallah as a result of Israel's confiscation of the VIP permit that granted him unrestricted movement throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Due to the blockade imposed on the city, Tirawi would have to remain there, an Israeli security official said the previous day. Five hundred Palestinian Authority officials hold VIP passes falling under three categories. Eighty officials holding category 1 cards may enter Israel via the international border crossings and have free movement between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The remainder fall under categories 2 and 3 and require special permission to

enter Israel. The Oslo Agreement stipulates that those with VIP status are able to enter Israel via the international crossing only. (*Jerusalem Post*, 4 December)

43. On 11 March 2001, the IDF spokesman said the army regretted the delay caused to Latin Patriarch Michel Sabah on Friday afternoon, two days earlier, when he had been prevented by soldiers from passing an army roadblock near Ein Arik junction, west of Ramallah. The patriarch had left Ramallah and was on his way to a nearby village to conduct prayers when he was stopped by soldiers. Refusing to be stalled, he returned to Ramallah. The IDF spokesman said the soldiers had failed to follow regulations, and their commander conveyed his personal regrets. (*Jerusalem Post*, 11 March)

44. On 1 April, it was reported that Israel had refused permission for 24 Palestinian cabinet officials to cross through Israel, from Gaza to Ramallah, in order to attend the weekly cabinet meeting there. As a result of Israel's refusal, the Palestinians had held the meeting without the missing cabinet officials. (*Ha'aretz*, 1 April)

6. Closures

45. On 10 October 2000, it was reported that IDF was stepping up the closure of the Palestinian territories. However, according to Shlomo Dror, spokesman for the coordinator of Israeli government activities in the territories, the decision had not been taken as a punishment measure against the Palestinians, but rather out of security considerations. He said it had been decided to bar the Arab workers after the Palestinian Authority had released over 20 Hamas terrorists from prison. The Government had also banned entry into Israel by officials in the Palestinian Authority, including VIPs. The safe passage, however, would continue to function, with about 1,000 Palestinians using it daily, Dror said. In the meantime, Israeli officials said that the continued closure of the Karni crossing into the Gaza Strip was causing shortages of basic foodstuffs. Particularly in short supply were eggs, milk products and canned goods. The officials claimed that Israel had allowed the Karni crossing to remain open, but the Palestinians had shut down their side for the past week in protest. Violence over the past week had also caused a growing number of Palestinians to suffer from power outages throughout the West Bank. There had also been instances of water lines being damaged. In related news, it was reported that some 40,000 Palestinian residents living in Israeli-controlled parts of Hebron continued during the current week to live under tight closure restrictions. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 10 October)

46. On 13 October, it was reported that the Israeli army, which had been strengthening its forces for over a week, had deployed the day before tanks around every major Palestinian city in the West Bank. Not only had it enforced a closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but it had isolated the cities from each other, preventing the Palestinians from moving in or out of their pockets of control. In Gaza, which was already fenced off, the navy had imposed a blockade. (*Jerusalem Post*, 13 October)

47. On 18 October, it was reported that the complete isolation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip during the recent clashes had disrupted essential services in the territories and paralysed the Palestinian economy. While the most immediate concern was the supply of medical services to hospitals crammed with wounded from clashes with IDF and settlers, Palestinian officials were also worried about the far-reaching effects of the closure on other essential services and on the Palestinian economy. The first restrictions on passage between the territories and Israel had been imposed on 5 October and total sealing-off had been enforced on 12 October. Direct access to towns in the West Bank and Gaza Strip had been prevented by IDF roadblocks and troops, and towns have been cut off from surrounding villages. The movement of goods between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and between cities and villages was not permitted under the closure. Access to the territories via the Rafiah and Allenby border crossings had been limited and 40,000 residents of Hebron's old city had been under virtual house arrest for 19 days. According to Palestinian sources, the closure had disrupted medical services throughout the territories, making it difficult for hospitals to treat Palestinians wounded in clashes with IDF forces. Applications to have the most severely wounded evacuated to surrounding Arab countries for urgent medical treatment had been delayed by unusual protracted authorization procedures. Medical institutions throughout the West Bank reported that doctors were unable to reach their clinics due to restrictions on movement, and sick people from the villages had been cut off from hospitals in nearby cities. The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights in

Gaza reported that medical equipment and medicines had not been reaching hospitals in time. Other government services, such as education, had been affected by the closure, as teachers had been unable to leave their homes to reach schools in the villages. In addition to the disruption to essential services, the cutting-off of the territories was also likely to cause widespread damage to the Palestinian economy. The Palestinian Ministry of Labour estimated that approximately 110,000 Palestinians were working in Israel, 40,600 of them under valid work permits. The loss of income to those workers was approximately 11 million shekels a day, which in turn affected the whole of the economy due to a drop in consumption. In addition, many Palestinian industries were paralysed by the halt in supply for raw materials from Israel. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Industry, Palestinian concerns were losing approximately $5 million a day. In related news, it was reported that IDF had begun implementing the agreement signed the previous night in Sharm el-Sheikh, withdrawing tanks from around Nablus. Also, it was reported that IDF would remove the roadblocks around Palestinian cities and open the border crossing and the Gaza airport. However, a decision on lifting the closure of the territories would be made only in the coming few days. (*Ha'aretz*, 18 October)

48. On 19 October, it was reported that two days earlier, IDF had blocked the entrance to a number of West Bank villages with sand piles and concrete blocks, while at the same time removing some of the roadblocks set up a week earlier when the internal closure had been put into effect. The road linking Khawara and Nablus was also blocked with piles of sand. Palestinian officials harshly criticized the blocking of the road which had occurred only hours after the conclusion of the summit meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh. The IDF spokesman's office issued a statement explaining that "the cement roadblocks were placed in order to enforce the encirclement of the Palestinian cities ... and will be removed as soon as the encirclement is lifted". In related news, it was reported that about 100 olive trees belonging to residents of Khawara had been cut down on 17 October. The villagers blamed settlers from Yitzhar for destroying the olive grove. They said that they had not tended their fields the day before, since they feared being attacked by settlers. (*Ha'aretz*, 19 October)

49. On 25 October, it was reported that the Palestinians had held several symbolic marches towards Jerusalem the previous day, the date on which the Prophet Mohammad is said to have arrived in Jerusalem and ascended to heaven. The marches demanded an end of the closure as well as the removal of IDF roadblocks which prevented free movement within the territories. Several Palestinian towns were still cut off from the rest of the territories by the roadblocks, including Nablus, Beit Jala, the Old City of Hebron and villages around Jenin. (*Ha'aretz*, 25 October)

50. On 1 November, it was reported that according to Israeli sources Palestinians had fired shots at civilian buses near the settlement of Alfei Menasheh, causing moderate injury to an Israeli passenger. In response, IDF had imposed an internal closure on Qalqilya, barring Palestinians from entering or leaving the city. In related news, it was reported that on the same day, IDF soldiers had closed the Gush Etzion tunnel road for hours at a time, following heavy gunfire in the El Khader area, near Bethlehem. Also, earlier in the same day, Israel had once again closed the Gaza airport because of the security situation. (*Jerusalem Post*, 1 November)

51. On 22 November, it was reported that local residents of Gaza had thronged around facilities where gas was sold. Israel had been blocking the transport of gas to Gaza for a week and supplies had been running low. The supply of electricity had been restored the previous day in Gaza; a series of blackouts had been caused by the recent bombings on the city. Unlike the situation two days earlier, Israel's closure policy cutting off areas in Gaza was enforced tightly, and residents were unable to sneak past IDF checkpoints to get from one region to another. In one incident, Gaza residents who tried to circumvent checkpoints had been dispersed by tear gas. Classrooms in Gaza universities had been empty because students and faculty had been unable to reach them. The uprooting of citrus and palm trees in the vicinity of the Kfar Darom settlement had prompted considerable anger and discussion in Gaza. (*Ha'aretz*, 22 November)

52. On 26 November, it was reported that during the previous day, gun battles had continued to rage in the Gush Katif settlement area in the Gaza Strip, particularly at a military post near Khan Yunis. Palestinians said that the Israeli blockade of the area's roads hampered treatment of the wounded. "We have a

problem with the wounded. The Israelis have Khan Yunis surrounded; we cannot transfer the wounded from Naser Hospital to the better EU-run hospital between Khan Yunis and Rafah", an official of the Palestinian Authority source said. The Palestinians said that IDF had shot at a Palestinian ambulance in Gaza. (*Jerusalem Post*, 26 November)

53. On 29 November, it was reported that Israel had reopened the Rafah crossing in the Gaza Strip the previous day and, if the violence subsided, it would consider easing more restrictions. These would include lifting the blockade on towns and villages in the West Bank and reopening the Allenby Bridge crossing and Dahaniya airport in the Gaza Strip. The easing of restrictions came as Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip began marking the holy month of Ramadan. It was reported that Israeli officials had discussed with their Palestinian counterparts ways to alleviate the economic pressure felt by the Palestinians during the past months of violence. According to Israeli sources, if the violence dropped drastically, Israel would allow the Palestinians to attend prayers at the Temple Mount on Fridays without imposing age restrictions and would also consider pulling back some of its tanks deployed near confrontation spots. At the Erez crossing, top-level Palestinian VIPs were allowed to travel between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank using the safe passage, which to date had been closed to them. (*Jerusalem Post*, 29 November)

54. On 6 December, it was reported that United Nations special Middle East envoy Terje Roed-Larsen had said the previous day that Israel's closure of the Palestinian territories had had a devastating effect on the Palestinian economy, had greatly increased the number of people living below the poverty line and had fuelled more anger. He said this hampered the peace process and had warned that the violence might spread across borders and turn into a new Middle East war. "The situation as it is now is not tenable. It may continue the way it is right now for a few more weeks ... It could deteriorate sharply, dramatically and tragically, which may produce regional spillovers so that we will face a regional war", he said. "The only way to save the situation is for the parties to return quickly to the negotiating table and make the painful compromises they have to", he said. Larsen's office the same week released a report on the Palestinian economy, stating that between 28 September and 26 November it had lost some $505 million. As a result, the number of Palestinians living on less than NIS 9 a day had doubled over the past three months. According to a World Bank estimate, the poverty rate would reach 31.8 per cent by the end of December and 43.8 per cent by the end of 2001, since the effects of the closure would have a long-term effect on the Palestinian economy. Some 110,000 Palestinian labourers had been prevented from working in Israel, and many others were unable to get from one Palestinian area to another to work. The United Nations report said each labourer supported at least four people, magnifying the effect of unemployment. (*Jerusalem Post*, 6 December)

55. On 10 December, it was reported that Israel had imposed a blockade around West Bank towns and villages over the weekend after three Israelis were killed in two drive-by terrorist shootings on Friday, as the Palestinians marked a "day of rage". (*Jerusalem Post*, 10 December)

56. On 20 December, it was reported that the Israeli army had lifted the blockade imposed on the city of Qalqilya the previous day, a closure which it had imposed a month earlier due to an escalation in shooting and violence in the area. (*Jerusalem Post*, 20 December)

57. On 22 December, it was reported that Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem for the current year would be minimal, with only religious ceremonies marking the holiday in the town. Palestinian officials continued to blame Israel for the situation. A press release issued by the Bethlehem 2000 Project stated: "Bethlehem is under a state of closure that actually bans any movement of people and largely restricts and discourages the inflow of tourists. Moreover, the Palestinian people have so far suffered the loss of around 350 martyrs and more than 7,000 wounded." However, a senior army official in the Central Command had said the previous day that Israel would consider easing restrictions on the city, including the lifting of the blockade, if the security situation remained calm. "We do not enjoy imposing restrictions, but they had to be enforced because of the security situation on the ground", he said. (*Jerusalem Post*, 22 December)

58. On 26 December, it was reported that as a goodwill gesture, Israel had allowed 200 Palestinian police to travel between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip the previous day. It was the first time since the wave of unrest had begun three months earlier that

Israel had let Palestinian forces travel en masse through the country. Military sources said that 100 Palestinian police stationed in the Ramallah area who lived in the Gaza Strip had boarded buses for home to see their families for the first time since September. IDF escorted the convoy from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip along the so-called "safe passage", the military sources said. On the return trip, 100 Palestinian police from the West Bank who had been quartered in the Gaza Strip had boarded the buses and returned home. In addition, some 80 civilians had been allowed to travel between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The gesture had been made in honour of the Id al-Fitr holiday, defence sources said. The safe passage had remained partially opened throughout the unrest but only for VIPs or for humanitarian purposes. (*Jerusalem Post*, 26 December)

59. On 29 December, it was reported that Prime Minister and Defence Minister Ehud Barak had the previous night ordered IDF to reimpose closure on Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, in response to the killing of two Israeli soldiers and the wounding of 16 soldiers and civilians in two bombings. Captain Gadi Marsha of the Kiryat Arba settlement and Border Police Sergeant-Major Yonatan Vermullen, 29, of Ben-Shemen, had been killed in a bombing attack at the Sufa crossing in the southern Gaza Strip the previous afternoon, just hours after 14 people were wounded in a bus bombing in the heart of Tel Aviv. (*Jerusalem Post*, 29 December)

60. On 16 January 2001, it was reported that, following the killing of an Israeli settler in the Gaza Strip the previous day, Israel had imposed a closure on the area which prevented Palestinian vehicles from travelling on the roads, barred Palestinian workers from entering Israel and closed down the Dahaniya airport in Gaza, as well as the Rafah border crossing to Egypt and the cargo crossings into Israel. The steps were in addition to the army's operations in the area the previous night, in which tanks and armoured personnel carriers had been deployed on the roads and highways, roadblocks set up and areas sealed off, effectively dividing the Gaza Strip into three isolated sections. (*Jerusalem Post*, 16 January)

61. On 25 January, it was reported that IDF had maintained its tight blockade on Tulkarm the previous day, and IDF spokesman Brigadier-General Ron Kitri again warned the public that the army had barred all Israelis from entering Palestinian-controlled areas after an incident two days earlier in which two Israelis were killed in the city of Tulkarm. (*Jerusalem Post*, 25 January)

62. On 6 February, due to the election in Israel, IDF imposed a general closure on the West Bank and Gaza, barring Palestinians from entering Israel except in cases of humanitarian aid. The closure would remain in effect until midnight. In related news, it was reported that three settlers from Beit El had been arrested the previous day for blocking a main intersection near Ramallah and denying access to all Palestinian vehicles. The three were part of a group of settlers who placed stone blockades in the path of vehicles. The settlers called on IDF to implement a promise made the previous month to prohibit all Palestinians from using roads used by settlers. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 6 February)

63. On 15 February, it was reported that, following an incident the previous day in which a Palestinian had crashed a bus into a crowded bus stop in Azur (Israel) town, south of Tel Aviv, killing eight Israelis — seven soldiers and one civilian — and injuring 26 others, Israel had imposed a full closure on the Occupied Territories and cancelled all the work and the entry permits recently issued to Palestinians. It had also reinstated roadblocks around major cities in the West Bank and Gaza, shut down the Dahaniyah airport in Gaza and closed border crossings leading from the occupied territories into Egypt and Jordan. In addition, a naval blockade imposed a few days earlier would continue and senior Palestinian Authority officials were barred from entering Israel. It was reported that although there had been closure since 30 September 2000, it had been periodically relaxed to allow tens of thousands of Palestinian workers into Israel. Following the previous day's incident, all Palestinian labourers were ordered back to the occupied territories, and the Israeli Government said it was going to review the policy of allowing in Palestinians to work in the country. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 15 February)

64. On 2 March, it was reported that IDF had surrounded Jericho with 2-metre-deep anti-tank ditches in an effort to stop Palestinians from leaving and Israelis from entering. If it worked, IDF would consider encircling other cities in the West Bank with similar trenches, military sources said. "The trenches were dug near the road to prevent attacks and IDF will take these actions according to its operational needs in order to protect Israeli civilians and soldiers", an army

statement said. The head of operations in the Central Command, Lieutenant-Colonel Gil, said that the trenches would save manpower previously needed to patrol the city of 30,000. Jericho had been chosen as a test case since it was relatively isolated and surrounded by open territory, which allowed the easy digging of the trenches, he told the IDF weekly *Bamahane*. Gil said that the trenches were aimed at stopping Palestinian cars from bypassing IDF checkpoints on the main roads. According to the army, the trenches were not aimed at preventing people from crossing by foot, but were mainly a barrier against vehicles, including possible car bombs. Residents told the Associated Press that the trenches were 1.5 metres wide and amounted to collective punishment. "They close all the roads", said Yasser Affouneh, 18. "They don't let us go. They only want to make a big jail." (*Jerusalem Post*, 2 March)

65. On 8 March, it was reported that as the new Government was being sworn in the previous night, IDF had dug trenches and sealed off villages near Ramallah, focusing activities around Bir Zeit, Ein Arik and Dir Abziah. Senior IDF officers claimed that, despite a blockade on Ramallah imposed several weeks ago, terrorist activities in the area had escalated and in many of the shooting incidents the terrorists had returned to Ramallah using the village side roads. IDF officials said that in some of the areas, soldiers were blocking access to the roads, and in other areas the roads were blocked by mounds of earth. Israeli officials rejected Palestinian claims that ambulances, food and medications were being prevented from reaching the local population. "Soldiers have instructions to offer humanitarian assistance and ambulances have access to the villages. In most villages there are optional routes that the locals can use." Palestinian human rights groups claimed that trenches had been dug 2 metres deep and cement blocks approximately 1.5 metres high had been placed from Surda to Bir Zeit, preventing vehicular access in and out of the areas. The groups claimed that 25 Palestinian villages and some 65,000 residents were affected. (*Jerusalem Post*, 8 March)

66. On 26 March, it was reported that IDF had imposed restrictions on Nablus in the form of a porous blockade. "We plan to impose restrictions on Nablus in an attempt to prevent terrorists leaving the city to perpetrate attacks. We will beef up our supervision around the city and implement a porous closure whereby humanitarian cases will be allowed through the roadblocks", an Israeli army officer stated. In confrontations with soldiers in Hebron and Gaza the previous day, Palestinians reported scores wounded. Hundreds of Palestinians had attempted to break through the southern exit of Nablus to oppose the continued restrictions. Confrontations continued most of the afternoon, with Palestinians stoning soldiers, who responded with rubber-coated bullets and tear gas. (*Jerusalem Post*, 26 March)

67. On 27 March, it was reported that IDF had imposed an internal blockade and closure on Hebron the previous night and a curfew on Palestinians living in the Israeli-controlled section of the city after Palestinian snipers had shot dead a 10-month-old baby and moderately wounded her father Yitzhak, 24, in the legs as they stood at the entrance to the Avraham Avinu settlement in the city of Hebron. Minutes after the attack, IDF tanks had fired at a building in the Abu Sneneh neighbourhood on the hill opposite, which was identified as the source of the sniper fire. An intense exchange of gunfire followed. IDF called upon Palestinian residents in the neighbourhood to evacuate their homes by 9 p.m. the previous night. Palestinians claimed that several were wounded and soldiers arrested several Palestinians. The army also closed the Hebron-Jerusalem road to Palestinian vehicles. Knesset member Mussi Raz said that he was shocked over the attack and conveyed his deep condolences, saying that only separation from the Palestinians would provide the Jewish residents with security and would lead to their evacuation from Hebron in the future. (*Jerusalem Post*, 27 March)

68. On 6 April, it was reported that the Association for Civil Rights in Israel had petitioned the High Court of Justice to instruct IDF to immediately remove the roadblocks from the roads to the village of Tawneh near Hebron and the village of Rantis near Ramallah. In the petition, submitted by attorney Nimr Sultani, the association argued that the roadblocks seriously impaired the residents' ability to commute, subsist and obtain medical treatment. The villages of Tawneh and Rantis had no connection to any recent terrorist attacks, the association claimed, arguing that for the past six months IDF had been implementing a policy of collective punishment against the villagers in the West Bank. The petition quoted former public security minister Shlomo Ben-Ami, who conceded that "Israel is systematically starving the Palestinian population." It also quoted Defence Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer,

who had said 10 days earlier that he was against collective punishment because it was ineffective. The petitioner further asserted that the policy discriminated against the Palestinians: Israeli settlers had never been prevented from moving freely. The policy of "closure and siege" had in effect turned the Arab villages into giant compounds that were opened and closed arbitrarily, said the petitioners, calling it "a serious violation of human rights". (*Ha'aretz*, 6 April)

69. On 25 April, it was reported that, in order to safeguard Remembrance Day ceremonies that day and Independence Day celebrations starting on the same day, a general closure had been imposed on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and would remain in effect until 2 a.m. Friday. During the period, Palestinians would be barred from entering Israel and no merchandise would be permitted into the country. The Allenby Bridge and the Rafah border crossings would remain open, operating on a Sabbath schedule, and consideration would be given to humanitarian cases. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 25 April)

7. Checkpoints

70. On 31 October 2000, it was reported that the Palestinian Red Crescent Society had stated that a cancer patient had died few days earlier while in an ambulance en route to Jordan for treatment. The ambulance had been held up for a total of four hours at three different IDF roadblocks — near Bethlehem, Hebron and the Allenby Bridge. Raid Awas, 26, had died at the Allenby Bridge. (*Ha'aretz*, 31 October)

71. On 16 February 2001, it was reported that the High Court of Justice had issued a ground-breaking ruling the previous day, saying that it was legal for the General Security Service to prevent suspects from sleeping as long as the intention was to advance an investigation and not to exhaust the suspect or break his or her spirit. In its ruling, the court had rejected a petition submitted by the lawyer of Amna Mona, who was suspected of involvement in the murder of an Israeli teenager the previous month after she had allegedly seduced him over the Internet. The petition sought to prevent the General Security Service interrogators from depriving her of her rights and complained that she was being interrogated for longer than permitted, as a form of torture. (*Ha'aretz*, 16 February)

B. Manner of implementation of restrictions

1. Interrogation procedures

72. On 4 September 2001, it was reported that Nidal Dajlas, the suspected Palestinian militant who had been wounded and captured in the previous week's abortive attempt by the IDF Duvdevan unit to capture Hamas mastermind Mahmoud Abu-Hanoud, had petitioned the High Court of Justice, charging that he had been tortured and was barred from seeing a lawyer. Dajlas, who was represented by attorney Lea Tzemel, of the Public Committee against Torture and the Association for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, asked the court for an interim injunction ordering the Government to desist from applying illegal physical or mental pressure on him and to give him the medical treatment he needed. According to the petition, Dajlas was born in 1962, was married with five children and taught athletics in a school. After he was arrested on 27 August, "he was forced to undress and, despite his serious gunshot wounds, was interrogated, attacked, beaten and severely tortured", wrote Tzemel. "This took place near his home, before he was taken to the detention centre. The torture went as far as placing his head under the wheel of a military vehicle and threatening that unless he talked, his head would be crushed." Tzemel wrote that the interrogation had lasted four hours, even though Dajlas was bleeding profusely from his wounds. He was then taken to the Petah Tikva lockup, where he had been held since. Tzemel charged that Dajlas's life was in danger because of his wounds and the torture, and that he urgently needed proper medical treatment. To date, the authorities had barred Dajlas from seeing a lawyer. (*Jerusalem Post*, 5 September; *Ha'aretz*, 20 September)

73. On 5 September, it was reported that according to a report published by the Public Committee against Torture, the General Security Service has developed ways of torturing that bypassed previous year's Supreme Court ruling banning any form of torture of prisoners. The report also noted, however, that there had been a significant decrease in the number of reported incidents of torture. According to the Committee, during the current year, it had registered 11 complaints, compared to the 60 received the previous year. Testimony by victims of the General Security Service torture revealed that the service had found

ways of bypassing the court's ban by adopting methods not specifically listed by the court, including severe sleep deprivation, beatings, allowing only limited access to health care and legal assistance, and psychological pressure. The Committee said that, immediately after being informed of an instance of torture, it had filed a complaint with the State Prosecutor's Office, adding that it had yet to receive a response from the government office, even though some of its complaints had been lodged more than a year ago. (*Ha'aretz*, 6 September)

74. On 20 September, it was reported that Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations had demanded that IDF and the State Prosecutor's Office investigate complaints that the General Security Service (GSS) officers and a Duvdevan soldier had used torture during an operation. The complaints alleged that they had tortured a resident of the village of Assira Al-Shamaliya in whose home the Hamas fugitive Mahmoud Abu-Hanoud had been hiding during the previous month after a failed attempt to capture him. The Palestinian Al-Kanun Association and the Public Committee against Torture cited a deposition filed with them by the plaintiff, Nidal Dagles, a 38-year-old fitness teacher at a school in the village, in which he alleged that he had been tortured by the security forces while lying injured. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 22 September)

75. On 27 October, it was reported that six policemen were suspected of beating a Palestinian arrested for participating in the lynching of two IDF soldiers in Ramallah two weeks earlier. The policemen had allegedly beaten the suspect while transferring him from a police holding cell to a General Security Services interrogation facility, and again while returning him to police detention. The six policemen were suspended from their duties while awaiting the outcome. Policemen in Jerusalem the day before had given a conflicting account of the event. Some dismissed it as "no more than a few slaps on the face", other spoke of serious abuse. (*Ha'aretz*, 27 October)

76. On 19 March 2001, the Public Committee against Torture charged that the General Security Service had used some of the interrogation methods specifically banned by the High Court of Justice in its interrogation of a Palestinian detainee held since January. In a letter written to Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein and released to the press, the Committee charged that 36-year-old Nassar Iyad, picked up near Netzarim on 29 January, had been forced to sit on a chair bent over until his head touched the floor for a prolonged period of time. According to Hana Friedman, head of the Public Committee against Torture, the method was known in slang as "Gambaz". This charge and others were included in an affidavit signed by Iyad before his lawyer, Na'il Zahalka and appended to the complaint. The Committee had complained against GSS interrogation methods in the past, since the High Court had ruled that there was nothing on the statute books that legalized "moderate physical pressure", which the organization, and others, considered to be "torture". "This is the first time the Service had resorted in such an obvious way to circumvent techniques which the court absolutely prohibited", Friedman told *The Jerusalem Post*. "It is the first time we have received such a complaint since the ruling." In the letter to Rubinstein, Friedman also charged that the GSS interrogators had prevented Iyad from sleeping for seven nights, had placed handcuffs tightly around his wrists and stomped on them, and had beaten him. Iyad was being held in Ashkelon Prison. (*Jerusalem Post*, 19 March)

2. Administrative detention and conditions of detention

77. On 16 November, it was reported that, for the first time in five years, the IDF commander in the West Bank had issued an administrative detention order against a Fatah activist. Amin Ahmad, from the city of Hebron, had been arrested on 8 November, although the date of signature on the order was 12 November. A total number of 10 administrative detainees were currently in different Israeli prisons. (*Ha'aretz*, 15 November)

78. On 23 January 2001, it was reported that Mona Awana, the Palestinian woman suspected of luring 16-year-old Ofir Rahum to his death the previous week via an Internet relationship, had petitioned the High Court of Justice, demanding the right to meet with a lawyer. Awana, who carried an Israel identity card and came from Bir Naballah, under Israeli security control, had been arrested by General Security Service agents a few days earlier. Police Inspector-General Shlomo Aharonishki told reporters that Awana was not cooperating with her investigators and denied that she had been involved in luring Rahum to Ramallah, where he was shot and killed. Advocate Jawad Boulus petitioned the High Court, demanding to see Awana

and receive details about her arrest. He also demanded to know why Awana had been arrested under the law in effect in the administered territories and military law, rather than Israeli law, which would have granted her many more rights. (*Jerusalem Post*, 23 January)

79. On 11 February, it was reported that the High Court of Justice had rejected a lawyer's appeal to be allowed to visit the Palestinian woman suspected of being used as bait in the murder of Ashkelon teenager Ophir Rahum. Lawyer Jawad Boulos lost his appeal against the General Security Service order barring consultations between himself and Amana Jawad Mona Najar. The justice who heard the appeal did, however, order the security agency to permit eye contact between the two and instructed the State's Attorney to respond to Boulos' claims that the GSS agents were keeping her from sleeping and from receiving medical care. (*Ha'aretz*, 11 February)

80. On 2 April, it was reported that in a daring, well-timed operation, the elite IDF Duvdevan unit had entered Palestinian-controlled Area A and arrested five members of Yasser Arafat's Presidential Guard and another Palestinian civilian. The arrest had taken place close to midnight Saturday, near the village of Jaljilia north of Ramallah, 2 kilometres inside the territories under Palestinian Authority control, where Palestinians said the soldiers arrested everyone at a roadblock while a helicopter hovered overhead. A Fatah leader called the arrest a clear declaration of war. "How else would you understand the abduction of Palestinian policemen from Area A?" Hussein al-Sheikh asked. He called the arrest "organized state terrorism". (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 2 April)

3. Imprisonment and conditions of imprisonment

81. On 14 February 2001, it was reported that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had once again stopped arranging visits by West Bank Arabs with relatives in Israeli jails. The organization had decided on the suspension after two visits from the West Bank in the current week had taken place under what ICRC had termed unacceptable conditions. There were some 3,200 Palestinian prisoners in Israel, but Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza had been barred from entering Israel to visit their jailed relatives since the outbreak of the current intifada at the end of September 2000. (*Ha'aretz*, 14 February)

82. On 18 April, it was reported that according to a report published in Geneva by the International Secretariat of the World Organization against Torture (OMCT), some of the more than 300 Palestinian youths under age 18 who had been arrested since the intifada, had begun in late September 2000 to complain of being tortured mentally and physically. OMCT said 100 of the youths had been detained at the IDF prison at Megiddo, and another 20 were in IDF prison facilities in the West Bank. Eighty youths, some as young as 14, had been detained in the Sharon prison in Tel-Mond, operated by the Prisons Authority, and two teenage girls were incarcerated in the women's facility at Neve Tirtza Prison in Ramleh. The OMCT report said that some of the youths claimed to have been tortured physically and mentally during their interrogation or while being held in prison. The report also noted that youths held at Megiddo were mixed in with adult prisoners. The youths reported being beaten by Israeli convicts who had been jailed on criminal offences. One Palestinian youth said he was the target of an attempted rape by three prisoners who had been jailed with him on criminal charges. Others of the youths complained of being sexually molested, while still others said they had been slashed with knives or had had boiling water poured on them. IDF confirmed that 64 Palestinians, aged 17 to 18, were currently imprisoned at Megiddo, with another 10 under age 16 at four IDF prisons in the territories. An IDF spokesman said that, under the law, minors could be arrested in the territories for actions against Israeli citizens or security forces. "The prisoners are being held in reasonable conditions", the IDF spokesman said. The Prisons Authority said 36 Palestinian minors were incarcerated at Sharon prison after trial, and another 22 for being in Israel illegally. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 18 April)

4. Question of the use of force

83. On 18 August 2000, it was reported that the IDF had officially expressed regret over the death of Mahmoud Abdullah, 73, from the West Bank village of Sudra. Abdullah had been shot and killed the previous Wednesday by soldiers from the crack undercover unit after he had opened fire against them from the roof of his home in the belief that they were robbers. After the military inquiry into the incident was completed, the IDF spokesperson published the announcement expressing regret over Abdullah's death. The spokesperson said that one of the man's sons had told GSS investigators that since their home had been

broken into about a year ago, Abdullah had regularly guarded the roof at night, armed with unlicensed pistol. Meanwhile, Israeli human rights organizations asked Prime Minister and Defence Minister Ehud Barak to appoint an extra-military commission of inquiry to examine the circumstances of the shooting. The petitioners pointed to what they saw as numerous contradictions between the family's version of the events and the army's statement that the victim's family said that IDF had delayed the arrival of the civilian ambulance. (*Ha'aretz*, 18 August)

84. On 20 August, it was reported that police had the day before arrested 10 Palestinians and three Jewish settlers of Hebron, following clashes after an Arab taxi driver had struck a Jewish child and fled the scene. Police and security forces had moved into the area and declared it a closed military zone, firing rubber bullets and shots into the air to disperse the crowds. In another incident, a Palestinian woman shopper, clutching her bags, had been hit by a young Jewish woman who cursed her. The Associated Press reported that four soldiers had pushed a Palestinian man into a van, pulling his hair. Another soldier had kicked a Palestinian and hit him with his rifle butt. The beatings had angered Palestinian bystanders, who hurled stones at the soldiers. Troops, in turn, had fired rubber bullets to disperse the stone-throwers. Three Palestinians were hospitalized with beating injuries. Hebron Mayor Mustafa Natshe said the settlers had provoked the violence because they wanted to send a warning to Israeli negotiators that evicting Jews from Hebron would trigger violence. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 20 August)

85. On 12 September, it was reported that indictments had been submitted to the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court against three border police officers suspected of physically abusing three Palestinians. The three had set up a roadblock on the Jerusalem-Abu Dis highway the previous Monday night to check passing vehicles. Ahmed Darwish, Feisal Darbiah and Issah Imar had been returning from work at 2 a.m. when they were stopped near Abu Dis by the guards. The guards allegedly ordered them to get out of their vehicle and then allegedly stood them up against a wall and struck them on the head. The border policemen then asked them why they were working in Jerusalem and not in the territories. One of the policemen allegedly punched Darbiah in the face, causing his head to bang against the wall. Blood poured out of Darbiah's ears and mouth. The policeman then allegedly pressed his weapon to Darbiah's stomach, threatening to kill him and his friends. He then hit him between the shoulders with a rock, the indictment claims. Next, it is alleged that the policeman ordered Darwish to stand up straight and punched him and Imar. The policeman then handed Darwish a fork and allegedly ordered him to kill Imar, the indictment continued. When he refused, the policeman scratched his cheek and punched him. Another policeman then intervened, punching Darwish in the face. The two policemen even photographed each other punching the petitioners. The third policeman remained in the patrol jeep, watching and encouraging them. When they learned that a complaint had been filed against them, they met to coordinate their stories. (*Ha'aretz*, 12 September)

86. On 13 September, it was reported that the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court had extended the remand of the three border policemen accused of beating three Palestinians the previous week on the outskirts of Jerusalem until the end of court proceedings against them. In the light of the severity of the indictment against the three — Aharon Salman, 19, of Bat Yam, Yossi Halli, 20, of Ramat Asharon, and Roni Even, 18, of Petah Tikva — the judge, Orit Efal-Gabai, acceded to the prosecution's request that the accused should remain in custody and not be released or placed under house arrest. The judge wrote in her ruling that she had considered releasing the three under certain restrictions, but decided not to in the light of the severity of their actions. In the indictment filed in court against them, the three border policemen were charged with causing injury, abuse of power, making threats and obstructing justice. "Whoever is capable of sadistically beating, abusing and humiliating three innocent people for such an extended period shows the workings of a twisted mind. Moreover, to photograph all these actions for a souvenir, and then to continue as if nothing happened and attempt to coordinate an alibi proves they have lost their humanity", the judge said. (*Jerusalem Post*, 13 September)

87. On 28 September, it was reported that at least six Palestinians had been lightly injured by rubber-coated bullets and tear gas during clashes with IDF troops north of Ramallah. The clashes had begun after several hundred Palestinian youths gathered near the northern entrance to El Bireh to protest the visit by Likud Chair Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount earlier in the day. The protesters burned tires and hurled stones at an IDF

post; a Molotov cocktail was also hurled at the soldiers. Troops responded immediately by firing rubber-coated bullets and tear gas, keeping the demonstrators from reaching the nearby junction and from blocking traffic to the settlement of Beit El. The demonstration was dispersed within a few hours. Officers said yesterday that they believe the outburst was temporary and that the Palestinian Authority had no desire to cause an escalation of violence in the territories at the current stage. (*Ha'aretz*, 29 September)

88. On 2 October, it was reported that the violence which had engulfed Israel and the occupied territories since 28 September had so far claimed the lives of more than 30 Palestinians and 2 Israeli border guards, while hundreds of Palestinians had been injured. It was reported to be the worst outbreak of violence since the opening of an exit to the Western Wall Tunnel in Jerusalem four years earlier. The American Administration had laid the blame for the violence squarely on the visit of Likud Chairman Knesset member Ariel Sharon to Harm el-Sharif (Temple Mount) on 28 September 2000. The bloody incidents had also spread to Palestinian towns and villages inside Israel, in the northern part of the country. It was reported that IDF had reinforced its positions in the Palestinian territories and made use, for the first time, of more serious weaponry, signifying a step up in the degree of conflict with the Palestinians. IDF had deployed attack helicopters over Nablus and the Netzarim junction in the Gaza Strip. It had also fired bazookas and used snipers and hand grenades. Also the previous day, IDF soldiers at Netzarim had fired LAWs, or anti-armour bazookas, three times. Also for the first time, IDF soldiers had thrown hand grenade at Palestinians, again at the Netzarim junction. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 2 October)

89. On 2 October, it was reported that the IDF was conducting an investigation into who had shot and killed a 12-year-old Palestinian boy, Mohammed Jamal al Durra, in Netzarim in full view of television cameras. At one point al Durra and his father, Jamal, had been seen crouching behind a few cement blocks, bullets ricocheting above their heads, the boy crying out of fear. People were yelling at them to take better cover. Suddenly the child was shot dead and the father was wounded, in a state of shock. Mohammad's mother watched the whole incident on television. IDF had expressed regret over the boy's death, but an Israeli officer insisted that the boy had not been killed by army gunfire. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 2 October)

90. On 3 October, it was reported that in another round of intense fighting in the territories the day before, at least 10 Palestinians and 2 Israelis, had been killed in a heavy exchange of fire, involving the use of helicopters that fired rockets against Palestinian positions at the Netzarim junction in Gaza. It was reported that Palestinians casualties over the previous five days of violence stood at 50 dead and more than 1,000 injured. In Netzarim, heavy exchanges of fire were renewed around noontime and Israeli attack helicopters were called to the scene, firing 2 anti-armour rockets at Palestinians positions. Both rockets had scored direct hits and there were varying reports on injuries, although at least three Palestinians had been killed and some 50 injured. Near Joseph's Tomb in Nablus, dozens of Palestinians continued their attack against the Israeli army positions. The Israeli soldiers responded with live fire, which was backed by sniper fire from nearby hills. The IDF also called for helicopter gunships, but according to IDF spokesperson, they did not fire at the demonstrators. The IDF command said that tanks would be deployed to rescue besieged soldiers, if required, regardless of the consequences. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 3 October)

91. On 3 October, IDF apologized for the death of Mohammed al Durra, a 12-year-old who had been killed at the Netzarim junction in the Gaza Strip the previous Saturday in front of French television cameras. An investigation by the IDF southern command revealed that the boy was indeed killed by IDF fire. After the initial examination of the footage, IDF mistakenly concluded that the shot which killed the boy had come from the north-western corner of the junction, close to the IDF outpost. The army thus announced that the IDF fire could not have killed the boy because of the impossible angle of the shot. None of the IDF soldiers stationed at the outpost had admitted to harming any civilian during the clashes. Deputy Chief of Staff, Moshe Ya'alon said the previous day at a press conference that he apologized for the killing of the child. He blamed the Palestinian Authority for its cynical use of children, Ayalon added that, "the way we understand it, the boy arrived at the spot to throw stones and his father came to collect him when he realized that the fight was getting serious ... The IDF may have spotted fire coming from the

Palestinian police building and did not know that they were hitting a father and son." (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 3 October)

92. On 3 October, it was reported that some 1,300 people had been injured in the previous four days. Most of the injuries suffered by Palestinians were in upper body parts, mainly the head, chest and abdomen, according to medical reports provided by hospitals in Gaza and the West Bank. Jerusalem's St. John ophthalmia hospital alone housed 13 patients, 8 of whom had lost eyes during the previous days' clashes. Only 20 per cent of those injured during the first three days of violence were discharged from the hospital on the same day. Palestinian physicians also reported that in many cases, bullets had exploded inside the body, shattering organs and making it impossible to save the patient. Although accusations were voiced that illegal ammunition had been used, these were apparently injuries caused by high-velocity guns. Gunfire from helicopters was also responsible for some of the injuries and deaths. Based on the type of injuries, the Palestinians asserted that IDF and the Israeli police had been instructed to kill. This conclusion was reinforced by the fact that on several occasions Israeli security forces had stopped ambulances and medical teams from evacuating injured Palestinians. According to data collected by Physicians for Human Rights, on the previous Saturday the police had blocked the road to the Augusta Victoria and Mukassed hospitals, thus delaying treatment for injured Palestinians. That day IDF soldiers at the Netzarim junction had shot directly at two ambulances that were trying to rescue Mohammed al Durra, the 12-year-old child who was later killed. One ambulance driver, Bassam al Balbasi, 45, was killed in the rescue attempt, and the other, Fathi al-Luh, was seriously injured. On the following day, snipers fired at six Palestinian ambulances at the junction, despite the Red Cross presence. On the same day, three medics from Palestinian non-governmental organizations were shot in Ramallah while treating injured Palestinians, although they were wearing clothes that identified them as medical staff. (*Ha'aretz*, 3 October)

93. On 5 October, it was reported that seven Palestinians had been killed the day before in clashes in the territories, as violence continued to rage. Three IDF soldiers and one Israeli civilian had been lightly wounded near Bethlehem. Two of the Palestinians had been killed in a gun battle in Bitunyia, west of Ramallah, two at the Netzarim junction in the Gaza Strip and one in El Bireh. Among the dead was a 12-year-old boy. Palestinian sources also reported that a nine-year-old boy from Gaza had died of wounds sustained the previous Tuesday. The heaviest fighting the previous day continued to be in Netzarim. IDF had sent in helicopters against Palestinian positions and eased the regulations for opening fire. The troops in the area were currently allowed to fire at any car approaching their outpost, for fear of car bombs, and at anyone climbing on the nearby "twin buildings", after several attempts to throw balloons containing gas from the buildings' roof-tops into the outpost. Several Palestinian policemen were reported wounded in the previous day's exchange of fire at Netzarim. No IDF soldiers had been hurt. Many incidents of shooting had occurred throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the day, rising in number as night fell. (*Ha'aretz*, 5 October)

94. On 11 October, it was reported that a young man from Ramallah in the West Bank had been killed and 12-year-old boy from Rafiah, in the Gaza Strip had been critically wounded in incidents that were verified to have occurred. The previous afternoon and evening there had been two shooting attacks near Nablus, and several Palestinians had been wounded when IDF had returned fire. The death of the Ramallah man occurred during a large-scale demonstration at the Ayosh junction north of the city. Also it was reported that Sami Abu Jazzer, 12, was pronounced brain-dead at Shifa Hospital after he had been struck in the head at Rafiah by what doctors said was a live bullet. He had taken part in a demonstration with other schoolchildren. Eyewitnesses said some of the children were throwing stones across a high wall behind an IDF position, but that Sami was behind the wall some distance chatting with friends, his school bag still on his back, when he was hit. The settlement of Tapuah in the West Bank, and IDF soldiers near the settlement of Migdalim, east of the Tapuah Junction, also came under fire. No Israelis were hurt in either incident, though in the second attack five Palestinians were wounded by IDF counter-fire. (*Ha'aretz*, 11 October)

95. On 13 October, it was reported that the day before, the Israeli cabinet had authorized Prime Minister Ehud Barak to order further air force strikes against Palestinian Authority targets if the violence in the territories continued. The cabinet also retroactively gave Barak unanimous support for his decision to

strike at the Palestinian Authority targets in response to the previous day's murder of two IDF reservists by a Palestinian lynch mob in Ramallah. Crashing down like an iron fist, Israeli helicopter gunships blasted Palestinian police targets in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Earlier the previous day, the air force had fired at least four rockets in the West Bank city of Ramallah, hitting the Palestinian police headquarters and other targets, the army said. "This action is a symbolic message to the Palestinian Authority that IDF will not quietly accept violent actions", an IDF statement said. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 13 October)

96. On 15 October, it was reported that two Palestinians had been killed and over 100 injured in clashes in the territories over the previous weekend. Though the scale of public protest had lessened after the large "Day of Anger" demonstrations on 13 October, gunfire incidents continued, particularly at night. More than 20 shooting incidents were reported in the territories on 13 October alone. Two Palestinians had died in Hebron two days earlier, during skirmishes involving stone-throwing, Molotov cocktail attacks and gunfire. Mansur Taha Ahmad, 21, a father of three, had died of gunshots wound sustained while watching Palestinian youths hurl stones at soldiers at an IDF outpost, eyewitnesses reported. They said that Ahmad had been shot by snipers using special silencers on their weapons. He had been taken for treatment to a hospital in Hebron. According to Palestinian sources, the wounded man might have been saved had he been taken to a Ramallah hospital, but that option was not available due to IDF roadblocks. Shadi Al-Wawi, 21, the second victim of the Hebron violence, had been killed by gunfire while standing on a roof of his home, around midnight on Friday, 13 October. Various witnesses at the scene reported that there were no clashes in the area when Al-Wawi was shot; according to the Palestinian human rights and environmental protection group, LAW, Al-Wawi was shot with two bullets, in the head and chest, fired from a range of 250 metres. A third Palestinian man, Ibrahim Turki, 38, was left in critical condition after being injured by IDF gunfire on Saturday afternoon near a Jewish settlement, Beit Haggai, south of Hebron. Turki was taken by an IDF helicopter to a hospital in Jerusalem. IDF expressed regret about the shooting of the Palestinian farmer. Palestinian sources reported that vigilante-like attacks by Jewish settlers against Palestinians were continuing, with IDF turning a blind eye.

97. On 15 October, it was reported that IDF had authorized local force commanders operating in the West Bank and Gaza to order their soldiers to open fire at stone throwers if they consider their troops to be under threat. The decision made it easier to respond to stone throwers with live ammunition, whereas before the recent eruption of violence, they were only permitted to fire "in extreme cases". During the previous weekend IDF troops had fired at Palestinian stone thrower in at least three instances. In one case, in Hebron, a stone thrower had been seriously injured by the fire. Another Palestinian who was "behaving strangely" was seriously wounded near Bethlehem. The injured man was evacuated to hospital by IDF helicopter. The IDF spokesperson said that the shooting had been a mistake and expressed regret about the incident. According to IDF, there had been a certain "relaxation" in the orders on opening fire issued to troops by the head of Central Command. The orders stated that "at point of conflict and disturbance, when there is a life-threatening situation, materials for dispersing demonstrations should be used, then shooting in the air, and only if these means do not bring results, firing of live ammunition at the legs, according to the instruction of local commanders." Legal experts told *Ha'aretz* that to date the instructions were very general about the use of live ammunition in life-threatening situations. The major change lay in the fact that local commanders were now being told that a stone-throwing could constitute a life-threatening situation. In recent years there had been few instances in which live ammunition was used against stone throwers. (*Ha'aretz*, 15 October)

98. On 16 October, it was reported that Raid Hamud, 30, of Al-Bireh, who had been injured on 10 October in a clash with the Israeli army, had died of his wounds the day before. He had been shot by a rubber-coated steel bullet. His death brought the Palestinian death toll to 92, of which 27 were children, according to the Palestinian human rights and environmental organization Kanon (LAW). The day before, it was reported that a man about 60 years old from the Hebron area had been seriously wounded on 13 October from shots fired from the area of the settlement of Beit Haggai, according to Palestinian sources. In related news, it was reported that soldiers from the *haredi* Nahal company patrolling the Jordanian border had exchanged fire with unknown gunmen from across the Jordan river the day before, and at least two soldiers had been wounded. The incident had occurred near Kibbutz Gilgal in the Jordan valley, the army said. Also

the day before, three civilians had been injured when the car they were travelling in overturned after it was stoned near El Khader, not far from the Gush Etzion tunnel road. One Israeli woman had suffered moderate head injuries after the car she was travelling in was stoned near the settlement of Upper Betar, while another woman was slightly injured from stones thrown near the Gush Etzion tunnel road. In another incident, a vehicle with Palestinian licence plates attempted to run down soldiers posted at a roadblock near the Beit El military court. The IDF spokesman said the vehicle had ignored the soldiers' calls to halt and they fired warning shots at the vehicle, which fled the area. Shots were fired at IDF troops near Kuchin near Nablus, and stones and firebombs were thrown at IDF troops at Rachel's Tomb and the Ayosh junction. Clashes with IDF soldiers were reported in Hebron, Al Aroub and Hussan near Bethlehem. In the Gaza Strip, stones were thrown at an IDF patrol near Gush Katif and at the Neveh Dekalim hotel. No injuries were reported in any of the incidents. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 16 October)

99. On 18 October, it was reported that clashes between IDF forces and Palestinians had continued the day before, and the violence in the territories had claimed more victims. Two Palestinians had been killed in separate incidents, and a border policeman had been critically wounded in Jerusalem. Dozens of civilians, including some Jews, had also been injured in the clashes. A Palestinian civilian, Farid Nasara, 28, from the village of Furik, had been killed by a settler near the settlement of Itamar near Nablus. The incident had occurred when dozens of villagers had come to the olive groves for harvest, only to be stopped by two armed settlers who fired warning shots in the air. Then one of the settlers had shot and killed Nasara and wounded at least five more villagers. Two were in serious condition. During heavy fighting near the Erez crossing in Gaza the day before, a Palestinian Authority policeman had been killed. The fighting occurred when IDF soldiers and Palestinian workers clashed during the early hours of the morning. The soldiers used gas and rubber-coated steel bullets to disperse the demonstrators. Clashes also occurred in Bethlehem and the nearby village of Beit Sahur after the funeral of 14-year-old Osama Jawarish, who had been killed by an IDF sniper on 15 October during demonstration near Rachel's Tomb. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 18 October)

100. On 22 October, it was reported that at least 12 Palestinians had been killed in clashes during the previous two days against IDF troops in the occupied territories. Violence flared throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with gunfire erupting as well as Molotov cocktails and stones being hurled. Five of the Palestinian casualties were youngsters under the age of 16. About 400 Palestinians were hurt by the IDF fire on 20 October and another 250 were injured the day before. All told, 111 Palestinians had died since the outbreak of the violence; 33 of the casualties were children. It was reported that the IDF had escalated the level of force it used in response to Palestinian violence, contributing to the rise in the number of Palestinian casualties. Helicopters, missiles and machine guns were used and, as warning to local residents in the town of Beit Jala, IDF tanks had opened fire for the first time. Three houses and a carpenter shop in Beit Sahur had been hit on 20 October by IDF fire that included helicopter missiles. An IDF outpost was located close to the Palestinian houses, in a valley running between two neighbourhoods of the primarily Christian town. IDF missiles were fired without any prior warning to the local residents; but the Beit Sahur residents had left the buildings earlier and thus only six people were hurt in the attack. Palestinian sources insist that the most recent violence in the West Bank and Gaza had started with protest demonstrations. Officials from Palestinian human rights organizations who had monitored clashes on site adamantly rejected Israel's claim that IDF gunfire came only when its soldiers faced mortal danger. Palestinians opened up with retaliatory gunfire, these sources claim, only after IDF snipers first shot at Palestinian demonstrators in their upper bodies. In addition, the same human rights workers claimed, Israel had infringed the terms of previous week's Sharm el-Sheikh agreement by reinforcing deployment around Palestinian towns and villages. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 22 October)

101. On 23 October, it was reported that four more Palestinians had been killed the day before in clashes with Israeli security forces in the West Bank and Gaza. In response to shots fired at the Gilo settlement near Jerusalem the previous night, an Israeli air force helicopter had shot at the nearby Palestinian village of Beit Jala. The attack by the helicopter gunship had occurred around 9.30 p.m., with rockets fired at a marble factory from which Palestinians, according to Israeli sources, shot at the neighbourhood. Two of the Palestinians killed in the northern parts of Gaza Strip had been throwing stones and firebombs at an IDF position in the area. Wail Imad, 13, had been shot with a rubber-coated steel bullet in the forehead. Eye-witnesses said that he had been shot at a distance of 20

metres. The second Palestinian killed in the Gaza Strip was Salah Nizm, 15, who was hit in the heart by a live bullet during clashes near the Israeli settlement of Kfar Darom. Two other Palestinians, Imad Hawamdeh, 23, and Nail Zamahrah, 25, were killed in clashes near Hebron following the funeral of a boy from Kfar Samua, Majd Hawamdeh, who had been killed three days earlier in Al-Bireh. According to Red Crescent, in addition to the latest four deaths, 113 other Palestinians had been injured, 23 of them by live ammunition and 16 by rubber-coated steel bullets. In the meantime, the IDF was reported to have reinforced its positions throughout the West Bank and Gaza. The following is the information regarding Palestinian casualties according to the Palestinian Red Crescent:

		Injured					
Date	*Killed*	*Live ammunition*	*Rubber bullets*	*Tear gas*	*Fire*	*Other*	*Total number*
29 September	7					300	300
30 September	13	104	464	26		28	622
1 October	10	103	314	75	6		498
2 October	9	114	230	44		27	415
3 October	8	51	205	102		22	380
4 October	9	57	107	72		3	239
5 October	3	13	28	11		10	62
6 October	10	70	208	66			344
7 October	3	10	27	23		2	62
8 October	2	16	9	8		3	36
9 October	2	21	82	41		2	146
10 October	0	16	36	23		1	76
11 October	4	5	32	28		6	71
12 October	2	8	6	5		37	56
13 October	2	36	130	54			220
14 October	0	3	12				15
15 October	1	6	8	20			34
16 October	3	37	86	63		2	188
17 October	3	7	36	63			106
18 October	1	35	63	88			186
19 October	3	16	33	22		8	79
20 October	9	58	192	64		3	317
21 October	3	34	153	57		4	248
Total	**107**	**820**	**2 461**	**955**	**6**	**458**	**4 700**

(*Ha'aretz*, 23 October)

102. On 24 October, it was reported that the previous night IDF had used tanks to respond to yet another series of shooting incidents from the Palestinian neighbourhood of Beit Jala at the Jewish settlement of Gilo near Jerusalem. The tanks, which have been stationed near Gilo a week earlier, opened fire on targets in Beit Jala using their heavy machine guns. The main guns of the tanks were later called into action, firing several rounds at the village. Reports indicated that at least three persons had been injured as a result of the IDF fire. In related news, it was reported that two Palestinian youths, shot by IDF soldiers a few days before, had died the previous night from their injuries. A 53-year-old woman who had tried to run through a checkpoint at Tulkarm on her way to work in Israel had suffered a heart attack and died. According to the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights in Gaza, the number of dead Palestinians as a result of the violence since 29 September 2000 had reached 119. In the previous day's incidents, 45 Palestinians had been injured, 5 of them seriously. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 24 October)

103. On 25 October, it was reported that two Palestinians had been killed the previous day and dozens injured in clashes with IDF troops throughout the West Bank and Gaza. Nimer Morai, 16, was killed in clashes near the West Bank city of Jenin, while Nidal a-Dwiki, also 16, was killed in clashes in Gaza. In addition, 13-year-old boy, Iyad Shaath, who had been injured few days earlier in clashes in Khan Yunis, died from his wounds the day before. Five Palestinians were seriously injured. There were no Israeli casualties. It was reported that the Palestinians had held several symbolic marches towards Jerusalem the previous day, the date on which the Prophet Mohammad is said to have arrived in Jerusalem and ascended to heaven. Palestinian sources said that IDF troops, and perhaps settlers as well, were continuing to direct heavy gunfire at Arab houses in Hebron every evening. Many houses had been damaged. Palestinians also said that a doctor, a member of an ambulance crew and one civilian had been hurt by IDF fire in Beit Jala. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 25 October)

104. On 29 October, it was reported that as the Al Aqsa Intifada entered its second month, gunfire clashes between IDF troops and Palestinians intensified during the previous weekend and the casualty list had grown. Four Palestinians had been killed on 27 October, bringing the Palestinian death count up to 126 in a

month of violence. Some 250 Palestinians had been injured on the same day and another several dozen had been hurt the day before, Palestinian sources reported. The number of the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank injured in the previous 30 days had reached 5,500, they said. The four Palestinian casualties on Friday were Rasan Awaisah, 22, from the Dahariyah refugee camp, who had been shot during clashes in Ramallah; Bashir Shalwit, 15, from Qalqilya; Ahmad Kassam, 25, from Tu'karm; and Gaber al Meshal, 23, from the Gaza Shati refugee camp. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 29 October)

105. On 30 October, it was reported that four Palestinians had been killed and about 50 wounded, while two Israelis had been lightly wounded, in bloody clashes between Palestinians and IDF. Palestinian protesters marched to the Karni crossing, on the eastern outskirts of the Gaza Strip, throwing stones and firebombs at the soldiers. It was reported that a column of IDF tanks and armoured personnel carriers had entered the area to clear away the demonstrators. Palestinian sources said that two Palestinians had been killed in the shooting incidents, with some 20 others injured. Among the dead were Samir Aliwa, 31, from Gaza, and Hosnii Najar, 15. Palestinian eyewitnesses claimed that those killed by Israel gunfire were not posing a threat to soldiers and were not near any Palestinian gunmen. Near Nablus, two Palestinians were killed during heavy exchange of fire at the village of Kalil, near Nablus. The dead were Shadi Shuli, 23, from Assira Shimaliyah, and Osmat Saber, 35, from Nablus. In another incident, a guard at the Augusta Victoria Hospital in East Jerusalem was shot in the shoulder at close range the day before. According to the guard, a car with Jewish youths had arrived in the early morning hours and one of them, wearing a kippa (yarmulke), had got out and shot him. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 30 October)

106. On 31 October, it was reported that clashes in the West Bank and Gaza had left two Palestinians, 20-year-old twin brothers, dead and dozens injured. Bilal Salah was shot during clashes near Jenin, but his brother Hilal was found dead later in an olive orchard. Palestinian sources said that IDF soldiers had been seen in the orchard earlier. A third Palestinian, Fadi al Harous, 22, of Jenin, died the day before of wounds received on 26 October. Following the killing of two Israeli security guards in East Jerusalem, Israeli helicopters the previous day had attacked targets in the West Bank and Gaza. The attacks had been approved by Prime Minister Ehud Barak. According to Israeli sources, the attacks targeted different Palestinian Authority offices headquarters throughout the West Bank and Gaza. However, Palestinians said that five residents in adjacent apartment building had been hurt in the Ramallah attack. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 31 October)

107. On 31 October, it was reported that since the outbreak of Al Aqsa Intifada on 29 September, the different ages of Palestinians killed in violent confrontations with the Israeli security forces reflected the fact that Palestinian public as a whole was engaged in the demonstrations, according to data presented by Dr. Mustafa Bargouthi, President of the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees. Bargouthi argued that this fact countered the "Israeli propaganda" which maintained that Palestinian children "were being purposely sent" to the front lines of the conflict. Bargouthi insisted that the current uprising was directed against the occupation and blamed Israel for not choosing to examine the reasons why children were being killed by soldiers during the demonstrations and instead preferred to blame Palestinian parents for not caring enough for their children. Speaking in a press conference, Bargouthi said that 95 per cent of those killed in clashes with the security forces were not involved in demonstrations in which shots were fired against the soldiers. The protesters, Bargouthi said, were armed with stones and firebombs, which were answered with precision shots fired by snipers. According to statistics collected by Bargouthi's organization, as at 29 September, 144 Palestinians had been killed and some 5,000 injured. Of the latter group, at least 1,000 would be disabled for the rest of their lives. Bargouthi pointed out two main conclusions which lent credence to his strong accusations: Most of the injuries suffered by demonstrators had occurred on their upper bodies, and Israel claimed that the shots involved were the result of "precision" or sniper fire. Bargouthi also rejected the possibility that all the injured Palestinians had endangered the lives of Israeli soldiers. He said that had the lives of the soldiers truly been in danger, they would have fired at parts of the body other than the head and the neck, in order to maximize the chance of hitting their attackers. Bargouthi also discounted the Israeli claim that Palestinians were attacking Israeli sites. He claimed that the demonstrations were taking place on Palestinian soil, in towns and villages, against an

occupying army, and that the army shot at unarmed civilians. (*Ha'aretz*, 31 October)

108. On 1 November, it was reported that clashes had broken out the day before throughout the West Bank and Gaza for the thirty-fifth consecutive day. Six Palestinians had been killed: four in Gaza and two in the West Bank. The heaviest clashes had occurred near the Karni crossing in Gaza, where two tank machines had gunned down Palestinian posts near the crossing and IDF snipers had fired at Palestinian positions. Heavy fighting had been reported also in the vicinity of Bethlehem in the West Bank. The Palestinian Red Crescent organization reported that some 89 people had sustained injuries from live gunfire, rubber-coated bullets and tear gas in the territories the day before. According to *Ha'aretz*, two more Palestinians had been pronounced clinically dead after being shot by IDF gunfire. In related news, it was reported that CNN Cairo bureau chief Ben Wedeman had been shot and lightly wounded as he reported from the Palestinian side of the fighting near the Karni crossing. IDF officials said it was unclear whether he had been hit by Israeli or Palestinian gunfire. In related news, it was reported that Israeli artillery had bombed villages and towns in the Bethlehem area. The attacks had emanated from helicopter gunships, anti-aircraft weapons and artillery from tanks. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 1 November)

109. On 3 November, it was reported that in a series of violent clashes with Israeli security forces throughout the occupied territories the previous day, three Palestinians had been killed and dozens injured. During the morning hours, a serious incident had occurred at the village of Hizma, north-east of Jerusalem, in which a 17-year-old Palestinian had been killed by border policemen firing rubber-coated steel bullets. Incidents occurred as well in the Gaza Strip, at the usual points of friction, near the junctions of Netzarim, Karni and Gush Katif. In related news, it was reported that Prime Minister Ehud Barak had resolved the night before to give Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat a day longer to implement a new ceasefire agreement, even after a car bomb had exploded on a side street of Jerusalem's Mahaneh Yehuda market, killing two Israelis and lightly injuring 11 others. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 3 November)

110. On 5 November, it was reported that four Palestinians had been killed in clashes with the Israeli security forces on 3 November 2000, among them a 14-year-old Palestinian girl who was on her way back from school in Bethlehem. The other victims were Rami Mutawa, 15, and Muhmud Sa'id, 19, both residents of Kfar Hizma, east of Jerusalem. Palestinian witnesses said the two teenagers from Kfar Hizma had been shot dead after the clashes had come to a halt while they were on their way home. The other victim, Nahed al-Luh, 21, a resident of Dir-al-Balalh in the Gaza Strip, had been killed in Tulkarm. According to the Palestinian Red Crescent, up to 600 Palestinians had been treated for injuries sustained in clashes with the Israeli troops during the past two days. Most of the injured had been treated for gas inhalation. Ten Israelis had also been injured in the clashes. In Hebron, it was reported that settlers had blocked the roads, obstructing Palestinian traffic, saying it was inconceivable that Palestinians should be allowed to travel freely on the roads at night so as to continue to shoot at Jews. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 5 November)

111. On 6 November, it was reported that two Palestinians, Marwan al Ramari, 27, and Maher a-Sa'idi, 16, had been killed the day before by IDF fire near the Al-Burij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. A Palestinian human rights activist said that the soldiers had started shooting immediately after the first stone was thrown at them, even though they were not hit. At least 80 Palestinians were injured, some from gunshots and others from tear gas inhalation. It was reported that IDF had directed heavy fire at several houses in Khan Yunis, in the Gaza Strip as well as Hebron, Ramallah and Qalqilya in the West Bank. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 6 November)

112. On 6 November, it was reported that two Palestinians had been killed by Israeli soldiers at the Netzarim junction in the Gaza Strip and a third had been seriously wounded the day before. Israeli security forces announced that they would be on high alert as Muslims gathered for Friday prayers at Al-Aqsa mosque on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Many Palestinian organizations had declared the day as a "Day of Rage" against Israel, with demonstrations planned in overseas capitals as well as in Israel and the territories. During the afternoon, demonstrations resumed in several locations, including Hebron and Qalqilya. In Hebron, dozens of Molotov cocktails were thrown and a bomb was exploded; no casualties were reported. Exchange of gunfire had also resumed at the Netzarim junction at Joseph's Tomb in Nablus, the scene of the greatest violence since the fighting had

begun the previous week. Unlike previous days, IDF had refrained from using helicopters on the Netzarim front the previous day. (*Ha'aretz*, 6 October)

113. On 7 November, it was reported that violent disturbances had continued throughout the previous day in the West Bank and Gaza and, according to Israeli sources, in several instances shots had been fired from within crowds of rioters. Two Palestinians were killed. Wajdi al Khatab, 15, was killed by IDF fire near Tulkarm, where, according to IDF, Palestinian demonstrators were throwing firebombs and rocks at soldiers. The Palestinian version of the incident maintained that the IDF soldiers had begun shooting at the schoolchildren and armed Palestinians had opened fire in response. Palestinians said that another youth, Muhammed a-Ta'aban, 17, had been killed in the confrontation near the settlement of Kfar Darom, in Gaza. A third Palestinian, Mustafa al-Jazar, 19, had died the previous day in Morocco, where he was treated for wounds received in a clash with IDF on 28 October. In addition, shooting incidents had taken place in Hebron, at the Ayosh junction north of Ramallah, at two locations near Nablus, near Jenin and near Vered Jericho (an Israeli settlement near Jericho). According to Palestinian sources, IDF had shot at houses in different locations; IDF said shots had been fired from the houses. In particular, the Palestinians said, IDF had shot at houses in Qalqilya for five hours during the night two days earlier, injuring one girl and damaging several buildings, including a power plant. Electricity had been restored to large part of Qalqilya only the day before, they said. The Palestinians continued to complain that IDF had overreacted to Palestinian gunfire. Such bursts of shooting were generally very brief, which was why the Palestinian police had been unable to get to the site and stop the shooting. Meanwhile, Reuters reported that a Palestinian suspected of taking part in the previous month's lynching of two IDF soldiers in Ramallah had been arrested in Jerusalem the previous day, according to police sources. The sources said the Abu Dis resident had been seized by police while in the city. Local Palestinian papers called on the public to mark the fortieth day since the outbreak of violence and declared Friday another "Day of Rage". (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 7 November)

114. On 8 November, it was reported that the previous day, soldiers and Palestinians had continued to exchange fire in isolated clashes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Two Palestinians had been killed and scores injured in the clashes. According to Palestinian sources, Abdallah Amarneh, 24, had died after being shot in the heart during clashes in Bethlehem. A second Palestinian, Said Abu-Khatla, 24, of Gaza, had also died of injuries sustained during clashes with IDF the previous Friday. In addition, Palestinian sources claimed that Ahmed Khufash, 6, of Salfit, had been intentionally run down and killed by a car driven by Israeli settlers. The settlement of Gilo (considered to be one of Jerusalem's Jewish neighbourhoods) had come under fire the previous day, after a few days of relative calm. There had been no reports of injuries or damages to property in the neighbourhood. IDF had responded by firing machine guns and anti-tank rockets at the adjacent Palestinian village of Beit Jala, the source of the shooting. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 8 November)

115. On 9 November, it was reported that four Palestinians had been killed in clashes with IDF. They were identified as Fares Odeh, 14, Hilal Abu Sa'ad, 18, Mohammed Abu Rali, 17 (all killed in clashes in Gaza) and Raid Dawood, 14, from Salfit, in the West Bank. The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights charged that in both major Gaza clashes, IDF had fired at demonstrators who were some 150 metres away. At that distance, the Centre said, the stone throwers posed no danger to the soldiers. It said that this constituted a "severe escalation" in the army's policy of dispersing demonstrations. It was reported that another two Palestinians had died the day before from injures sustained in clashes with IDF: Ibrahim al-Kasim, 13, from Jerusalem, who was injured on 4 November, and Mohammad Mahahani, who was injured the previous day. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 9 November)

116. On 10 November, it was reported that Hussein Abayat, a Fatah movement commander, had been killed by an IDF helicopter missile strike which had hit the vehicle he was travelling in near Bethlehem. Abayat's deputy, Khaled Salahat, had been critically wounded in the attack and two women bystanders had been killed by shrapnel. Nine other Palestinians had been wounded. IDF said that Abayat, 33, had been responsible for a series of bloody operations against Israelis over the past six weeks, including shooting attacks on Jerusalem's Gilo neighbourhood and Rachel's Tomb outside Bethlehem. There were no formal apologies for the deaths of the two women, Rahmi Shahin and Azziza Danoun, both 50. The attack, by an Israeli air force Apache helicopter, was

reminiscent of the 1992 assassination of Hezbollah leader Sheikh Abbas Musawi in southern Lebanon and marked the expansion of the scope of operations against Palestinian combatants. "This morning's action is part of the actions being initiated by the security forces and will continue", an IDF statement read. "It is aimed at hitting those responsible for escalating the violence. This comes after Fatah Tanzim severely intensified its attacks against Israeli civilians and security forces in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip during the past few weeks." According to Palestinian sources, Shahin and Danoun had been getting into their car outside their home to accompany an ambulance that was transferring one of their relatives to hospital when Abayat's vehicle was hit nearby. The ambulance crewmen injured in the attack were Dr. Nidal Salame, Amer Assad, a nurse, and driver Adnan Shuneid. Rassan Andoni, of the Rapprochement Centre, said that three people had been killed and 10 wounded, some seriously. (*Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post*, 10 November)

117. On 12 November, it was reported that 10 Palestinians had been killed in clashes during the previous two days, by IDF fire in incidents at the Karni junction, the Erez industrial zone, Jenin, Hebron and the Katif junction. It was reported that the army had responded to Palestinian fire directed at the settlement of Psagot with anti-tank missiles, and on midnight Friday, 10 November, it was reported that IDF had opened fire on a residential neighbourhood in Hebron. The fatalities brought to 202 the number of victims killed in the clashes that had begun in late September 2000. In related news, it was reported that the Palestinian journalists' association the previous day had condemned the wounding of an American photographer for the Associated Press, apparently by an IDF rubber-coated steel bullet. She had been covering a Palestinian demonstration near Rachel's Tomb. She was the fourth journalist to be wounded by IDF fire, the statement said. (*Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post*, 12 November).

118. On 13 November, it was reported that a 16-year-old Palestinian had been killed following clashes with Israeli soldiers near the Erez checkpoint, bringing the number of Palestinians killed since the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada to 177. Another 42 Palestinians had been injured throughout the occupied territories the day before. In related news, it was reported that IDF troops had fired with missiles and machine guns at Beit Jala, Beit Sahur and al Hader, in response to Palestinians shooting at the Jewish settlement of Gelo. A Palestinian youth, 17-year-old Aiman al-Wadi, had died the day before from a bullet wound sustained on 8 November. Near midnight on 11 November, two more Palestinians — Osama al Buwab, 28, and Majid Abed, 32, of El Bireh — had been killed when IDF forces attacked a building from which shots had been fired towards the Jewish settlement of Psagot in the West Bank. Eyewitnesses said the two had been killed by a single missile fired from an IDF helicopter. It was reported that the same night, IDF forces had attacked some other towns: Tulkarm, Dir al-Balah, Nablus, Jenin and Jericho. In total some 16 Palestinians had been wounded by IDF fire that night, including a 60-year-old woman and a 4-year-old boy who had been struck in the head in Nablus. (*Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post*, 13 November)

119. On 14 November, it was reported that two Palestinian "rock throwers", 16 and 17, had been killed by IDF fire. A third, Ahmad Dahlan, 19, the nephew of the Gaza Preventive Security Chief Mohammad Dahlan, had died the day before in Ichelov Hospital in Tel Aviv from gunshot wounds to the head, sustained near the Gush Katif junction three days earlier. Ahmad Dahlan had been a student at Al-Azhar University in Gaza City and had been on his way home to Khan Yunis when he was shot near the Gush Katif junction. Dahlan said his nephew had been unarmed and had been hit either by helicopter gunfire or by a soldier in a lookout post, since the wounds were at the top of his head. He dismissed earlier reports by IDF saying that Ahmad Dahlan was one of the two policemen who had been shot at the junction after they opened fire at soldiers. An Ichelov Hospital spokesperson said that the Palestinian Authority was not involved in Dahlan's transfer from Shifa Hospital in Gaza; it had been completely a humanitarian effort. Of the other Palestinians admitted to Ichelov in recent weeks, only two remained. A 15-year-old boy who had been shot in the abdomen was still undergoing treatment, while a boy who had been blinded in both eyes was scheduled for surgery, the spokesperson said. In related news, it was reported that Israel had the day before sustained its highest daily casualty toll since the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada. Two settlers and two IDF soldiers had been killed in different shooting incidents in the West Bank and Gaza. IDF had responded by sealing Area A localities under Palestinian Authority control. The previous day's events brought to 205 the number of people killed since September 28, the vast majority

of them Palestinians. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 14 November)

120. On 15 November, it was reported that four Palestinians, including a 13-year-old boy, had been killed and dozens wounded in clashes with IDF troops throughout the occupied territories the previous day. The date of 15 November marked the twelfth anniversary of the Palestinian declaration of independence at the Algiers Conference and, with mass demonstrations expected, IDF was preparing for possible widespread clashes. Mohammed al-Ajala, 13, and Raid Shakafa, 19, had both been killed in clashes in Gaza. Palestinians denied that either of them had in any way been endangering soldiers' lives. Another Palestinian boy, Sabar a-Barash, had been killed at the Ayosh junction north of Ramallah. Palestinians said he had been standing in a considerable distance from soldiers and was not posing a threat. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 15 November)

121. On 16 November, it was reported that, acting on cabinet approval, Israeli attack helicopters had attacked houses in Beit Jala, Tulkarm, Jericho, Nablus and Hebron the previous night. The attack followed a stormy day of demonstrations across the territories in which eight Palestinians were killed and dozens wounded. According to Israeli sources, the attack had been in response to both the shooting in Gilo and the general escalation of violence over the previous few days. According to an IDF spokesperson, the attack on Beit Jala, which included missiles and tank rounds, had taken place at around 11 p.m. The air force had targeted houses from which shots had been fired. A building was destroyed, and there were apparently some injuries. The eight Palestinians killed the previous day were Ahmed Bassel, 15; Fathi Salem, 18; Samer Khader, a Palestinian policeman, 29; Jadu'a el-Kebabash, 16; Abd el-Hafez Gharuf, 20; Ahmad Shaaban, 16; Mohammed a-Sharafi, 17; and Ibrahim Jaidi, 15. Five were killed in the West Bank and three in Gaza. In addition, Mohammed Abad had died the previous day of wounds sustained earlier. According to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, another 164 Palestinians had been wounded the previous day. The IDF, however, denied that all of the killings had occurred during demonstrations. Army sources said that, at least in the Gaza Strip, some of the men had been killed during gun battles with IDF troops. In related news, it was reported that two Palestinians had been injured, one seriously, when, according to Israeli police, a border policeman's gun had accidentally gone off in Emek Ha'ela, near Beit Shemesh. The policemen had come there to catch Palestinians trying to enter Israel illegally. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 16 November)

122. On 17 November, it was reported that a Palestinian youth had been shot and killed during clashes with Israeli troops at the Al-Fawar refugee camp near Hebron, and another Palestinian had been killed near Bethlehem the day before. Dozens more Palestinians and three Israelis had been hurt in different clashes throughout the territories. Samar al-Katar, 18, had died in the Al-Fawar incident. Palestinian radio said he was to have been married the day after he was killed. Al-Katar's relatives said that he had bled to death after an ambulance was turned away at several Israeli checkpoints. The Palestinian killed near Bethlehem was Yusuf Suleiman Abu Awwad, 25, from the village of Beit Umar. He was killed at an Israeli checkpoint. According to an IDF spokesperson, Abu Awwad had attempted to snatch a soldier's weapon and during the struggle the gun had gone off, wounding Abu Awwad. However, Palestinian reports said that Abu Awwad and another man had been stopped at an IDF checkpoint outside of Beit Omar, and asked to leave their car and walk away from the area. According to sources, Abu Awwad had refused to step away from his car due to concerns that IDF undercover units would use it for strikes against Fatah operatives, at which point he was shot and killed at close range by an IDF soldier. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 17 November)

123. On 17 November, it was reported that figures released by Physicians for Human Rights/USA on 7 November suggested that IDF troops aimed for the head when shooting at Palestinians. "Some 50 per cent of the fatal injuries in Gaza were to the head", the doctors wrote in their reports, "with around 26 per cent of the 1,134 injured in Gaza and the West Bank sustaining injuries to the head or neck ... our conclusion is that the soldiers are aiming for the heads of the civilians." Data provided by Dr. Mustafa Bargouthi, of the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees, indicated that 192 Palestinians had been killed as at 16 November. Of those, 92 per cent had been shot by rifles with a high muzzle velocity (as opposed to rubber-coated steel bullets). About 98 per cent of the Palestinians killed by gunfire had been hit in the upper part of their bodies, with 52 per cent hit in the head or neck. Additional figures showed that 13 per

cent of the fatalities were under the age of 15; 20 per cent between 16 and 18; and 4 per cent above the age of 50. (*Ha'aretz*, 17 November)

124. On 17 November, it was reported that thousands of Beit Jala residents had attended the funeral of Dr. Harald Fisher, a 68-year-old German chiropractor who had been killed by IDF fire while trying to help neighbours who had been injured when a rocket crashed into their home. He had been married to a Palestinian woman and had raised their three children in the village. The time of the Israeli attack was unclear. Heavy IDF firing had begun before dusk, according to "G", a Beit Jala woman who works for Palestinian medical organizations. "For us it was the heaviest night of bombing since the start of the intifada", she said. "I heard a few shots coming from our side and then the Israeli response came: tanks, machine guns and helicopter-fired missiles." (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 17 November)

125. On 19 November, it was reported that at least six Palestinians had been killed and dozens injured in violent incidents in the territories over the previous weekend, among them two senior Palestinian security policemen, Hassi Farawan, 45, and Khaled Salam, 35, who had been killed in Jericho by IDF snipers. Fatah Palestinian sources told *Ha'aretz* that the two senior security policemen killed by IDF fire had been trying to prevent Palestinian youth from shooting at IDF soldiers. A Jordanian citizen, Mohammad Samur, 38, had been killed in Qalqilya; Mohammad abu Ri'an, 14, and Hamza Abu Skhidam, 18, had been killed in the Hebron area; and Rami Yassin, 18, had been killed in Gaza. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 19 November)

126. On 20 November, it was reported that, despite the drop of violence, at least one Palestinian had been killed and seven wounded the day before. According to Palestinians, Abed a-Dehashan, 14, had been killed by IDF fire at the Karni checkpoint between Israel and Gaza. The Palestinians also blamed the IDF for the death of Nasser a-Najar, 35, a Palestinian security officer. According to Palestinian sources, a-Najar suffered from asthma and choked to death on tear gas used by IDF to disperse demonstrators at the roadblock between Khan Yunis and the nearby Jewish settlement. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 20 November)

127. On 21 November, it was reported that the Israeli Air Force had attacked nine targets in Gaza the previous night in response to the bombing of a school bus in Gaza, which killed two Israeli settlers and injured nine, including five children, from a nearby Jewish settlement. IDF's retaliatory attacks, which had occurred at about 6 p.m., were the most severe since the current disturbances began. Dozens of people were wounded, including some children. Initial reports also said one man had been killed, but the report was not repeated in later news broadcasts by the Voice of Palestine Radio. In contrast to previous air raids, IDF had not warned the occupants of the targeted buildings in advance. However, the Palestinians had been expecting a response and had vacated many of the likely targets before the raid took place. This was also the first time IDF had targeted Mohammed Dahlan's Preventive Security Service. Dozens of missiles had been fired at the Palestinian targets, which included one of the headquarters of the Preventive Security Service, a Palestinian television relay, the headquarters of Yasser Arafat's Fatah organization, a training installation of the Presidential Security Service, three buildings belonging to Arafat's elite Force 17 and a Palestinian security installation in Rafiah. The targets were located in Gaza City, Khan Yunis, Dir al-Balah and Rafiah; some were very close to Arafat's own offices. The attacks also knocked out the electricity in much of Gaza. In related news, it was reported that IDF had killed two armed Palestinians late Sunday night, one near Qalqilya and one near Nablus. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 21 November)

128. On 22 November, it was reported that four Palestinians had been killed by IDF gunfire. In addition, a settler from the Netzer Hazani settlement in Gaza had died the previous night, hours after he was wounded by a Palestinian sniper attack at an Israeli convoy around the Gush Katif junction. It was reported that the IDF had implemented a series of reprisal measures which had been used in recent weeks, such as destroying trees and houses in the vicinity of the attack. Two of the Palestinians killed in previous day's Gaza skirmishes were Mohammed Abu Samara and Hamad Abu Samiri. Palestinian Authority security compounds bombarded the previous Monday night by IDF attacks attracted thousands of Gaza residents, who had come to inspect the damage on 21 November. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 22 November)

129. On 23 November, it was reported that IDF had killed four Tanzim militiamen in Gaza in a planned operation, but army officers said that their original goal had been arrest rather than assassination. The four

killed were Jamal Abed a-Razek, 30, one of the leaders of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement in the Rafah region; Awni Dahir, 38, Sami Abu Laban, a bakery owner; and Nail a-Lidawi, 20, one of Abu Laban's employees. IDF said that a-Razak was responsible for a long list of shootings and bombings in the region over the previous two months. According to IDF, the operation had taken place at about 9 a.m. at the Morag junction near Rafah. Razek and another activist, whom IDF said served as his driver and security guard but Palestinians said was a real estate agent, were travelling from Rafah to Khan Yunis in a black Hyundai and an army jeep was waiting by the side of the road near the junction. According to IDF, the Palestinians apparently sensed something suspicious and therefore a-Razek pulled out a Kalashnikov rifle and attempted to open fire. The soldiers then fired back and killed him. His driver, in attempt to escape, crashed into a Mercedes, at which point IDF soldiers opened fire at the Hyundai. The driver and two occupants of the Mercedes were killed. IDF said that the two men in the Mercedes were also Fatah activists with ties to Razak. The Palestinian version was different. According to a Palestinian source, the incident took place at about 10.10 a.m., when a-Razek and Daher were driving towards Khan Yunis. These sources said that the soldiers began firing at the car from a nearby tank, at which point the car attempted to flee. In the course of the attempt, it crashed into another car, in which Abu Laban and Lidawi were travelling. At that point soldiers jumped down and began firing at the two cars. According to the Palestinians, some 200 bullets were fired. A-Razek is the nephew of the Palestinian Authority Minister for Prison Affairs Hisham Abed a-Razek, a strong supporter of the Oslo accords. The Palestinians charged that the Israelis had killed unarmed and innocent men. This was the IDF's second assassination of senior Fatah activists. The first had been on 9 November 2000, when Hussein Abayat was killed in Bethlehem. In related news, it was reported that a number of serious clashes between settlers and Palestinians had occurred in the occupied territories during the previous two days. The most serious incident had taken place the day before in the village of Silat a-Daher, when a settler had opened fire on Palestinians, killing one and injuring two youths. The settler claimed that, prior to the incident, Palestinians had thrown rocks at his car. In another incident, it was reported that settlers from the Ofra settlement had shot and injured two Palestinians who had tried to drive out of the village of Yabroad near Ramallah to evade the closure on the town. In another incident, a few dozen settlers rioted in the village of Hawara, south of Nablus. Military sources said that a convoy of about 40 cars had come to the village from the settlement of Elon Moreh to protest what was described as the "massive stone-throwing from the village at Israeli cars". The settlers fired shots in the air and burned Palestinian cars. IDF troops finally evicted them. (*Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post*, 23 November)

130. On 26 November, it was reported that nine Palestinians had been killed by Israeli fire over the previous weekend and two more had died from injuries received earlier. Some 160 others had been injured in clashes with IDF. The focal points of the fighting were the West Bank towns of Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Qalqilya, Bethlehem and Hebron, and Khan Yunis. There was a report the previous night that Khan Yunis had come under missile fire from navy gunboats, but the IDF spokesperson said that soldiers had been shot at from Khan Yunis and had returned fire, and had no knowledge of the town being targeted by naval vessels. According to Israeli sources, on 24 November, Palestinians had fired at soldiers in Hebron and Kfar Kalil, where Israeli tanks had fired back. Two Palestinian brothers, aged 28 and 26, had been killed during the shelling. Palestinians said that the two were in an empty house that was hit by one of the shells. The previous day, thousands had attended their funeral and continued to clash with IDF soldiers. In related news, it was reported that in a massive operation over the previous weekend, police, IDF units and General Security Service (GSS) agents had raided villages in Area B (Palestinian civilian control, Israeli security control) in the West Bank to capture 119 Palestinians allegedly responsible for throwing firebombs and stones and planting bombs. On 23 November, it was reported that special IDF units Duvdevan and Haruv, together with police and GSS agents, had killed Tanzim activist Faras Diab Sabanne and arrested other Palestinians associated with the Tanzim in the Jenin area who were responsible for shooting incidents in the Samaria region. The IDF spokesman denied Palestinian claims that the operation had occurred in Area A (under full Palestinian control). Meanwhile, Palestinians continued to blame Israel for the death of Hamas activist Ibrahim Bani Odeh, who had been killed the previous Thursday in an explosion in central Nablus. Palestinian security officials claimed that an

investigation showed that a bomb had been placed in the headrest of his car. They charged that the operation had been carried out by GSS. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 26 November)

131. On 27 November, Israel Radio and Army Radio reported that IDF snipers had ambushed and shot dead four Palestinian gunmen in Qalqilya the previous night. According to the IDF spokesperson, the four Palestinians had been on their way to carry out night-time attacks. In the Gaza Strip, a 22-year-old Palestinian, Assad al-Sharnubi, died of wounds sustained previously and Israeli snipers shot three Palestinian boys (ages 14, 15, 16 respectively) at the Karni crossing, wounding one in the eye and the two others in the head, Palestinian hospital and police officials said. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 27 November)

132. On 29 November, it was reported that a 17-year-old Palestinian, Imad al-Dahiya, had been struck in the head and killed by Israeli fire during clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli troops at the Karni crossing the previous day. Another Palestinian boy, 13-year-old Karim al Kurd, had died of wounds incurred in clashes in Rafah several days earlier. Dozens of Palestinians were wounded in clashes. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 29 November)

133. On 30 November, it was reported that in a series of shooting incidents the day before, at least two Palestinians had been killed by IDF in the Gaza Strip and an Israeli civilian had been seriously injured in the West Bank. The IDF spokesman said that the two Palestinians killed had been terrorists and that the army was still checking whether the terrorists had been on their way to perpetrate a terror attack inside Israel or had planned to plant a bomb at the border fence and detonate it near soldiers. The Palestinians claimed that the two were unarmed civilians on their way home for the Ramadan meal. "This was a cold-blooded shooting just before sunset before the Ramadan meal", Bassam Abu Sharif, an adviser to Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, said. Earlier in the day, IDF denied Palestinian reports claiming that it had been shelling the El-Bureij refugee camp and the Karni crossing. Palestinian officials claimed that 15 had been wounded in the attack, but the IDF spokesman said that the footage screened on Palestinian television consisted of archive shots and called the Palestinian claims "a bunch of lies". OC Ephraim District Colonel Eitan Avraham said that while there had been a decrease in shooting incidents in the Qalqilya area since the killing of five terrorists by soldiers on the previous Sunday, it was still too early to tell whether the situation indicated a drop in the number of incidents. Depending on the situation, he said, the army would decide in the coming days whether to lift the internal blockade on villages and towns in the West Bank, which would allow the residents to travel on the roads. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 30 November)

134. On 5 December, it was reported that 12 Palestinians had been wounded after Israeli air force helicopters had rocketed targets near Bethlehem in retaliation for shooting at soldiers and civilians near Rachel's Tomb. The Palestinians claimed that the shooting at Rachel's Tomb had been sparked by a "massacre" carried out by soldiers and settlers in the village of Husan the previous night. They said Israelis had entered the village and begun shooting at locals near the village mosque at the end of the Ramadan fast on Sunday evening, in retaliation for the throwing of firebombs and stones at Israeli vehicles passing the village earlier in the day. During the clashes that followed, 25 Palestinians had been wounded, Palestinian sources said. Five of the wounded were in critical condition, according to Palestinian sources. Officials and eyewitnesses said that settlers had entered the village in a van and opened fire at the mosque. The soldiers had opened fire at the Palestinians after the latter started to throw stones at the settlers and soldiers in response to the shooting, a Palestinian Authority source said. A statement issued by the IDF spokesman denied the Palestinian report, saying that the incident had been sparked by the attempt by a 14-year-old boy to snatch the weapon of a soldier in an army jeep patrolling the village. The IDF spokesman added that soldiers had fired rubber-coated bullets and tear gas to disperse the Palestinian mob and had also fired live ammunition at the leaders of the violence. He insisted, though, that none of the shooting had taken place from inside the village. (*Jerusalem Post*, 5 December)

135. On 6 December, it was reported that two Palestinians had been killed and two Israeli civilians lightly wounded in another day of clashes in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Palestinians said two youths had been killed in clashes with soldiers near El Khader and at the Ayosh junction north of Ramallah late the previous afternoon. The IDF spokesman said there had been disturbances in the area, but that soldiers had

fired rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse the demonstrators. (*Jerusalem Post*, 6 April)

136. On 10 December, six Palestinians, four of them policemen, had been killed in clashes the previous Friday at the emotional funeral in Jenin of four Palestinian policemen and one civilian who had been killed by an IDF tank shell. The Palestinians claim the policemen had been shelled while they were inside their police station, in an area under joint security control. Israel said it had fired the shell at armed Palestinians in areas under Israeli control. The Associated Press quoted Palestinian policeman Mohammed Hijazi, who witnessed the incident, as saying the tank had fired without provocation. He said that his colleagues had been chatting when the post was suddenly shelled. IDF said its tank had fired after soldiers spotted four suspicious armed figures. On Friday, one Palestinian youth had been shot dead in Jerusalem's Old City, following prayers on the Temple Mount. The Palestinians marked the thirteenth anniversary of the outbreak of the first intifada by declaring a general strike. (*Jerusalem Post*, 10 December)

137. On 12 December, it was reported that Israeli soldiers had shot dead top Islamic Jihad fugitive Anwar Mahmoud Hamran near Nablus the previous day. The Palestinian Authority had released Hamran, 28, along with other Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists, six weeks earlier. He was the second Islamic activist assassinated by Israel in Nablus over the previous three weeks. Hamas activist Ibrahim Bani Odeh had been killed on 23 November when the car he was riding in blew up. Arab reports said that Hamran had been shot while standing in his stationery shop. Hussam Jouhari, director of Nablus's Rafidia hospital, told Reuters that Hamran had been hit by at least 19 bullets and had died instantly. In Hebron, soldiers shot a Palestinian in the legs after he pulled a knife on them, the army said. This followed a shooting attack on a nearby IDF outpost. An army medic had treated the wounded Palestinian and had been evacuated by the army to a hospital. Also in Hebron, 13-year-old Mansur Jaber, shot in the abdomen the previous Saturday during a clash between settlers and Palestinians over a building on Givat Harsina, died of his wounds. (*Jerusalem Post*, 12 December)

138. On 13 December, it was reported that a senior Fatah activist had been killed by soldiers as he stood outside his home in the village of Artas, near Bethlehem. Palestinians said that the man, Yusef Ahmed Abu Sway, 28, had been shot in the head, stomach and legs. IDF said it was checking into the story. In related news, it was reported that the previous day, Israeli police and IDF troops had arrested four Palestinians suspected of involvement in clashes with Israeli security forces and of incitement. One of the suspects was from Al-Aroub, south of Gush Etzion, the others from Kafr Dir-Isstiya in Samaria. Police said the four had confessed to the charges. Meanwhile, Palestinians in Beit Jala invited the press to view the damage from the heavy gun battles waged between Palestinians and the IDF Monday night following the ricochet shooting of Gilo resident Galit Yekutieli, 24. The Palestinians claimed that several buildings had been damaged, including a church in the village. (*Jerusalem Post*, 13 December)

139. On 14 December, it was reported that four Palestinians had been killed and scores wounded when Israeli troops tried to enter Khan Yunis refugee camp, north of the Gaza Strip, in order to create a security zone and prevent Palestinians from shooting at the Gush Katif settlement. Palestinian security source said the dead men were three policemen and one civilian. Other Palestinian sources said all four were policemen and had been killed when they stood in the way of tanks entering the camp. They were named as Mohammed Abu Ula, 25, Mahdi Akeilah, 35, Ahmed Mteir, 30 and Jaber Sabea, 27. According to yet another account, Akeilah was killed when a shell hit his police outpost, while the other three were shot. (*Jerusalem Post*, 14 December)

140. On 15 December, it was reported that for the fourth straight day, Israeli forces had shot dead middle-level Palestinian activists, in what IDF initially described as a chance encounter with gunmen. The Palestinians were calling it a deliberate policy of assassination against their key activists and some had admitted taking precautions to stay out of sight of IDF. While not officially acknowledging that IDF had hit squads carrying out a policy of elimination, top IDF commanders repeatedly and unabashedly said that the army would get its hands on all those who harmed Israelis and attacked its soldiers. IDF said the previous day that it had shot Hani Abu-Bakker at a roadblock near Khan Yunis after he had reached for his pistol. Military sources said that the soldiers had been waiting for Bakra, a Hamas gunman, and wanted to apprehend him, not kill him. In the past four days, one Islamic

Jihad, one Fatah and two Hamas activists had been shot dead, most with multiple gunshot wounds and under questionable circumstances. "It looks like there is a policy of assassination because it has been repeated almost daily. You can tell by the way it is being done. It is not a coincidence and seems to be planned very well", said Ghassan Khatib, director of the Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre. (*Jerusalem Post*, 15 December)

141. On 17 December, it was reported that seven Palestinians had been killed over the previous weekend in incidents in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, four of them during two raids by Israeli security forces in the Nablus area. Mohammed Fahad Ghani Ma'ali, 70, had died in a Jenin hospital the previous Friday from wounds sustained earlier. According to Palestinian reports, Ma'ali had been crossing a road near Ajar village near Jenin when he was caught in crossfire as soldiers and Palestinians clashed. The IDF spokesman said there was no record of any clashes in the area on Friday, and IDF was not aware of any such incident. Abdul Ibrahim and Mohammed Lufti Kasem, from Tal, had been killed between Thursday night and Friday morning in IDF actions, and Palestinian policeman Nihad Abu Hintesh, 28, from Salfit, and Adhan al-Kharouf from Nablus, had been killed in a separate IDF action. Their bodies were handed over to the Red Crescent on Friday morning, as was the body of Mohammed Dahoud, 18, from Hares. The IDF did not identify the incident in which Dahoud had died, but the Palestinians said he had died in clashes that Friday morning. (*Jerusalem Post*, 17 December)

142. On 18 December, it was reported that five Palestinians had been killed the previous day, two in clashes with soldiers near the Rafah crossing. A Fatah leader in Jerusalem had died in a bomb explosion in the Kalandia refugee camp the previous morning. Also, the previous afternoon, soldiers had discovered the body of a 16-year-old Palestinian boy near the village of Aboud, outside Ramallah. The boy had been shot in the head, and the soldiers handed over the body to police, who launched an investigation. At least five Palestinians were wounded in clashes and exchanges of gunfire in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. According to reports, Iyad Daoud, 27, and Ahmad Qassas, 38, were shot dead at the Salah e-Din gate on the Gaza-Egypt border. The Palestinians claimed that the two had been killed and three others wounded when a tank fired as they crossed the road. Meanwhile, Fatah accused Israel of being responsible for the death of its Jerusalem leader, 28-year-old Sameeh Malabeh, killed when a bomb exploded in the Kalandia refugee camp the previous morning. (*Jerusalem Post*, 18 December)

143. On 21 December, it was reported that in a day of heavy gun battles between Palestinians and soldiers in the Gaza Strip, three Palestinians had been killed, including a minor, a fourth man had died of wounds incurred earlier, and some 30 Palestinians had been injured. The incidents had occurred in the Rafah area, near the border with Egypt, at the Netzarim junction and at the Erez crossing. Palestinians identified the dead boy as Hani Alsouf, from Rafah. Two members of the Palestinian Civil Defence Force had also been shot dead in the Gaza Strip the previous day, Palestinian sources said. Regarding the killing of the youngster, Hani Alsouf, the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment (LAW) said he was 14 years old and had been sitting at the entrance to his house in Rafah when he was killed. The organization said tanks and a bulldozer had attempted to enter a Palestinian-controlled area and when locals resisted, the army had shelled buildings and raked his home with machine-gun fire. The previous afternoon, Salman Zoreb, 29, had died of wounds sustained the previous night in gunfights between Palestinians and soldiers in the Rafah area. Responding to the Palestinian claims, the IDF spokesman denied the shelling. Also the previous morning two Palestinians had been killed at the Netzarim junction. The Palestinians said that 22-year-old Civil Defence staff member Rifat Abu Marzouq and 30-year-old Nidal Abu Oun had been driving a fire truck to assist locals when soldiers shot them in the head. (*Jerusalem Post*, 21 December)

144. On 22 December, it was reported that two Palestinians had been killed in clashes with IDF in the Gaza Strip the previous day. The fatalities were identified as Rashid Barhoun, 26, of Rafah, and Ahem Mreish, 18, who had been shot at the Karni crossing. IDF confirmed there had been gun battles in Rafah, but had no reports of any shooting at Karni. In a-Ram, near Jerusalem, soldiers fired at the truck, wounding the driver, Nasir Awida, 26, in the arm, hand and leg, after he deliberately crashed into and hurt four soldiers, the IDF spokesman said. Meanwhile, the IDF spokesman denied Palestinian claims that soldiers had shot at the vehicle of Palestinian Planning Minister Nabil Shaath as he was travelling with a convoy of diplomats in the

Neveh Dekalim area to show them the damage caused by Israel. However, the spokesman said the vehicle might have been caught in crossfire between soldiers and Palestinian gunmen. (*Jerusalem Post*, 22 December)

145. On 22 December, it was reported that a senior IDF officer confirmed Palestinian claims that the army had adopted a tactic of tracking down and killing militants, often with sniper fire, in an effort to quash the three-month-old uprising, Israel Radio reported. According to Palestinians, 19 activists had been killed in such a fashion. The radio said the officer, who wasn't further identified, had denied the Palestinian characterization of the actions, calling the killings attempts to "thwart" plans and efforts by militants to carry out attacks on Israelis. It quoted him as saying that political activists were never targeted. "The main way for killing the activists of the military wings of Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Fatah is by sniper fire, locating the fugitive and shooting him, but the officer said there are other means", the radio said. Asked for comment, Major-General Amos Malka, Israel's chief of military intelligence, told Reuters at a national security conference in Herzliya: "I am not the senior officer and I don't want to comment." The IDF spokesman also declined to comment. The officer quoted in the radio report declined to say how many Palestinians had been killed that way but said it was "a new way of dealing with the continuing intifada". However, the report said that political figures were not targeted, adding: "So, for instance, the Israeli army has not set its sights on [Gaza preventive security chief] Mohammed Dahlan, [senior Fatah leader in the West Bank] Marwan Barghouti and others who are designated political leaders". A helicopter missile attack on the car of a senior Fatah gunman in the Bethlehem area in October was the highest-profile killing of this kind. (*Jerusalem Post*, 22 December)

146. On 1 January 2001, it was reported that a senior Fatah leader, Dr. Thabet Thabet, a 49-year-old dentist, had been shot in his car outside his Tulkarm home the previous morning. Palestinians claimed the shots had been fired from the direction of Area C, under Israeli control. The IDF spokesman declined to comment on the shooting, saying there had been exchanges of gunfire between soldiers and Palestinians where factories in the town are located. Prime Minister Ehud Barak commented on the operation by saying: "The army has the freedom to operate against those seeking to harm us and we will continue to maintain the right to retain that freedom to act against those seeking to harm us." A statement issued by the Palestinian Authority condemned the incident and accused Israeli security forces of implementing "state terror". Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti said in response to the assassination that Barak "has opened the gates of hell". Fatah had called for a day of resistance on 1 January and called upon Palestinians to intensify the intifada during the coming two weeks. A Palestinian security officer said Thabet, a father of five, had been known as a moderate pro-peace supporter who had had no connection to shooting attacks on Israelis. He called Thabet's killing a revenge attack by IDF for the deadly shooting the previous morning of Binyamin Kahane and his wife Talia, who had been shot dead by Palestinian gunmen while driving near the settlement of Ofra. The Israeli left-wing Peace Now Movement stated that Thabet believed in peaceful coexistence and the right of the Palestinian State to be established next to Israel, and had also been in contact with Israeli peace activists. In a harsh letter to Barak, the Movement demanded to know if Israel had adopted an official assassination policy and whether, after Thabet's death, Barak believed a more fair leader would take his place. (*Jerusalem Post*, 1 January)

147. On 2 January, it was reported that the previous day, Mawad Amed Hidwan, 12, of Hebron, had died of wounds sustained two days earlier when he was caught in crossfire between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers in the city, and that 22-year-old Tahrir Rezeq had been shot in the head by settlers who drove into the village Hizme. In Tulkarm, thousands of Palestinians attended the funeral of Fatah secretary-general Dr. Thabet Thabet, killed outside his home that Sunday. Meanwhile, it was reported that IDF was investigating the circumstances surrounding the injury of Jadallah al-Jabarri, 50, who had been shot the previous morning by soldiers manning a roadblock near Beit Hadassah. An Associated Press photographer filmed the man talking with soldiers before he was shot; minutes afterward, he lay on the ground with a wounded leg. At first, the IDF spokesman claimed that Jabarri had run towards the soldiers and failed to heed their warnings to stop. The soldiers had fired warning shots in the air and then shot Jabarri in the leg when he ignored their warnings. However, the IDF spokesman said after film footage was shown to army officials, an investigation had been launched. The previous night Central Command Major-General Yitzhak Eitan said the

soldiers had been acting under threat, but that steps would be taken once the inquiry into the matter was complete. (*Jerusalem Post*, 2 January)

148. On 7 January, it was reported that two Palestinians had been killed the previous Friday in separate shooting incidents in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Another 21 had been wounded in weekend stone-throwing clashes throughout the West Bank. Mohammed Abu Haseera, 37, had been shot dead that Friday morning by Israeli soldiers. Israeli sources claimed that he had attempted to infiltrate an IDF position near the Erez crossing. However, Haseera's family said the victim was mentally unstable. Also that Friday afternoon, Arij Jabali, 19, a Palestinian female from Hebron had died of wounds from IDF fire, and another 18-year-old female had also been wounded in the clash. The IDF spokesman claimed that a request by the army to treat the woman had been turned down by the Palestinians. While the army said it regretted the incident, the IDF spokesman stressed that when Palestinians used buildings or areas populated by civilians to perpetrate shooting attacks, innocent people would be harmed. Stone-throwing clashes had broken out on 6 January at the Ayosh junction, the Ariel junction on the Trans-Samaria highway and near Qalqilya. Palestinians were wounded when soldiers responded with rubber bullets. (*Jerusalem Post*, 7 January)

149. On 8 January, it was reported that a Palestinian woman had been killed and three wounded in separate incidents in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip the previous day. However, the IDF spokesperson denied Palestinian reports that soldiers had shot and killed a 20-year-old woman driving near Beit Dajan, not far from Nablus. The IDF spokesman noted that there had been an exchange of gunfire between Palestinians and soldiers near Salem, not far from Nablus, but no shots had been fired towards a Palestinian vehicle. Soldiers had seriously wounded a 30-year-old Fatah activist. The IDF spokesperson denied Palestinian claims that the man had been shot by soldiers after they bound his arms and legs. Also the previous day, in the Gaza area, soldiers had shot and wounded a Palestinian. The IDF spokesman said the man had been carrying a suspicious metallic object on his back and that the soldiers, fearing he was going to perpetrate an attack, had shot at his legs. In related news, Palestinians reported that a 10-year-old boy had been seriously injured during clashes with soldiers at the Ayosh junction north of Ramallah the previous afternoon. The IDF spokesman said the army had no knowledge of the incident. (*Jerusalem Post*, 8 January)

150. On 9 January, it was reported that the IDF spokesperson stated that Israeli soldiers had shot a Palestinian, Abdul Hameed Kharti, 38, from el-Mighraka in the Gaza Strip at the Netzarim junction. According to the IDF spokesperson, Israeli soldiers, fearing the man was about to perpetrate a suicide bomb attack, shot him. The Palestinian human rights organization LAW said Kharti was mentally unstable. According to Palestinian sources, the man was killed in the incident. (*Jerusalem Post*, 9 January)

151. On 10 January, it was reported that Israeli soldiers had shot and killed two Palestinians in separate incidents in the West Bank late the previous Monday night and the previous morning. In the first fatal incident, according to Israeli sources, IDF soldiers had spotted a group of Palestinians throwing stones at Israeli vehicles near the village of Hares. Soldiers deployed a sniper who aimed for the legs of one of the Palestinians, but hit him in the abdomen. Mohammad Souf, a 27-year-old father of two, died en route to hospital in Nablus. In the second incident, the previous morning, near the village Silat A-Daher in northern Samaria, soldiers fired live ammunition to disperse Palestinian demonstrators. Palestinians said Abed Khanfar, 28, had been shot in the head and died en route to a hospital in Tulkarm after he was evacuated by a private car. In related news, it was reported that IDF soldiers had fired warning shots towards the car containing a senior Catholic bishop at a West Bank roadblock yesterday, his driver said. Bishop Bulos Marcuzzi, the Latin Patriarchal Vicar for Israel, the second-ranking Catholic prelate in the Holy Land, was on his way to visit a sick priest in the village of Zababde. Nobody was hurt and the car, which had diplomatic licence plates and was flying the Vatican flag on its right fender, was not damaged. IDF said it was investigating the incident, but apologized to the bishop for the shooting. (*Jerusalem Post*, 10 January)

152. On 10 January, it was reported that the wife of the Tulkarm Fatah leader, Dr. Thabet Thabet, who had been shot and killed by IDF soldiers outside his home the previous week, petitioned the High Court of Justice, calling for an end to the Government's policy of assassinating Palestinian officials. In her petition, Siham Adel Yusef Thabet charged that on 31 December, soldiers had opened fire from a military

truck parked across the street from her home, killing her husband, a 49-year-old dentist and father of five. Thabet was the secretary-general of the Fatah organization in Tulkarm. According to the petition, he had walked out of his house and entered his car when soldiers opened fire from the truck. A military jeep was parked behind the truck. Thabet's wife also charged that soldiers had opened fire in the direction of a neighbour, Dr. Yasser Hasin Sergelei, who rushed out of his home when he heard the shooting and the thud of Thabet's car as it crashed into an electricity pole. "The summary execution of a resident of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is without authority, illegal and in contradiction of the Geneva Convention which makes the occupying State responsible for the well-being of the residents under its control and in violation of the Basic Law: Human Freedom and Dignity", charged Thabet in the petition. (*Jerusalem Post*, 10 January)

153. On 11 January, Palestinian sources said that in Qalqilya five Palestinians had been injured in clashes with soldiers who dispersed the crowds with rubber bullets. In related news, it was reported that Chief of General Staff Lieutenant-General Shaul Mofaz, had stated that the Israeli security forces had permission "in principle" to eliminate "those people who have been clearly identified" as acting to carry out attacks against Israelis. Mofaz was quoted as telling the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee that "in the present circumstances", Palestinian "hostile elements" who endangered the lives of civilians and security forces "expose themselves" to an Israeli response. (*Jerusalem Post*, 11 January)

154. On 12 January, it was reported that six Palestinians had been lightly injured by rubber bullets during clashes with soldiers at the Al Fawar camp and at El Khader near Bethlehem. (*Jerusalem Post*, 12 January)

155. On 14 January, it was reported that, in Hebron, two days earlier, soldiers had shot and killed 23-year-old Shaker Hassouni in Shallalah Street, and wounded 15-year-old Mohammad Atrash. Local television showed soldiers dragging Hassouni's body away from the scene, on the border area between Palestinian- and Israeli-controlled sections of the city. The IDF spokesman claimed that soldiers had shot and killed Hassouni, an armed Tanzim activist, after he threw a bomb at them and shots were fired at them. (*Jerusalem Post*, 14 January)

156. On 11 February, it was reported that, two days earlier, a 16-year-old Palestinian had been killed in the Gaza Strip. Palestinian sources reported that he had been killed by IDF soldiers while watching his flock near the Israeli settlements of Kfar Darom. An IDF spokesperson said the incident was being investigated. According to Israeli sources, Palestinians had fired a mortar shell at the Netzarim junction the previous night. No one had been wounded. In the town of Al Bireh, Palestinians claimed that several buildings had been damaged during an exchange of fire with IDF troops, including damage to the offices of a German aid group and the Red Crescent organization. At the Ayosh junction there were heavy exchanges of fire after hundreds of demonstrators hurled rocks and firebombs at soldiers and then shot at them. Palestinian sources reported that at least 10 demonstrators had been injured. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 11 February)

157. On 12 February, it was reported that the Police Investigation Unit of the Justice Ministry was investigating suspicions that three border policemen had beaten a Palestinian youth in Jerusalem three days earlier. The youth, Foad Abu Sarhan, 19, had been lightly injured and was taken to hospital for treatment. Mirian Zucker, a resident of the Talpiot neighbourhood in Jerusalem, said that three days earlier, during the morning hours, she had noticed the three policemen beating and kicking the Palestinian youth. "I started shouting at them to stop", she said, "but they replied: 'Keep your mouth shut, you leftist; get out of here' ". Zucker said she left the scene and called police to report the incident. (*Ha'aretz*, 12 February)

158. On 13 February, it was reported that two Palestinians had been killed and dozens more wounded by IDF soldiers the previous day during another day of violent clashes in the West Bank and Gaza. The Voice of Palestine claimed that at least 90 people had been injured when the IDF opened fire on the Khan Yunis refugee camp. With regard to the first victim, the IDF claimed that 35-year-old Atif Nabulsi had refused to stop his car when ordered to by soldiers near Ramallah, even after they fired into the air and at his car. Nabulsi and another Palestinian passenger were severely injured by the shots. Nabulsi died en route to the hospital. The other victim, Ziad Abu Sway, was killed and two other Palestinians were injured by gunfire from border policemen near Al Khader, Bethlehem. Palestinian sources said Abu Sway was on a minibus with other Palestinian labourers when he was killed.

According to those sources the minibus carrying the Palestinian workers was travelling on a side road to avoid army roadblocks and encountered an army bulldozer and soldiers who ordered the bus to turn back and then shot at it. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 13 February)

159. On 13 February, it was reported that the Government of Israel the previous day had argued before the High Court of Justice that the killing of Palestinian "terrorists" and its policy of "liquidation" was legal under the rules of war codified in international law. The State's High Court brief was in response to a petition filed by the widow of Dr. Thabet, a Fatah leader from Tulkarm who had been slain by Israeli forces. The petitioner, Siham Thabet, on 9 January 2001, asked the court to order the Government to "stop its policy of summary executions against residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and rule that the order to execute people without trial as a result of a premeditated military act and not during battle or a military operation is illegal". The government brief said the court should reject Thabet's petition out of hand because the matter was "fundamentally non-justiciable". According to the State's brief, the killings were not "extrajudicial executions", but rather legitimate acts of war, whose purpose was to prevent additional terror attacks. The State's brief quoted a legal opinion on the subject authored by Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein. "The laws of combat, which are part of international law, permit injuring, during a period of warlike operations, someone who has been positively identified as a person who is working to carry out fatal attacks against Israeli targets", Rubinstein wrote. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 13 February)

160. On 14 February, it was reported that the previous day, in Gaza, Israeli air force helicopters had shot and killed Colonel Masoud Ayad, 54, a senior officer in Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's security detail, known as Force 17. The attack against Ayad had been carried out by two Apache attack helicopters that had fired three missiles at his vehicle, which was travelling at the time on a road parallel to the Jabaliya refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip. In another incident in Gaza, a 14-year-old boy was killed in disputed circumstances in Gaza as violence escalated following Sharon's election the previous week. Hospital officials said Israeli soldiers had shot 14-year-old Bilal Ramadan in the heart near the Karni crossing in Gaza. Prime Minister Ehud Barak had authorized the strike and told Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon of it. "Anyone who intends to harm Israelis will not escape, and the long arm of the Israel Defence Forces will know how to locate and even the score with him", Barak said in a statement. The Palestinian Authority issued a statement condemning the killing as "an ugly crime" and said it was part of Israel's "assassination policy", which it said had slain at least 20 activists in recent months. The European Union the day before sharply condemned what it described as "a policy of liquidation, or executions without trial", and demanded that Israel cease such activities in accordance with international law. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 14 February)

161. On 16 February, it was reported that the previous morning, Israeli soldiers had shot dead a member of the Palestinian Preventive Security Service. Nasser Hassanat, 19, of Dir Al-Ballah, was allegedly attempting to infiltrate the hothouses at Kfar Darom settlement in Gaza. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 16 February)

162. On 18 February, it was reported that the previous weekend, six Palestinians had reportedly been killed by Israeli soldiers. Another 60 Palestinians had been injured. Israeli sources reported that shots had been fired at the IDF positions near Hebron and near Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip, and that soldiers had returned fire. Three Palestinians had been killed in the Hebron area. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 18 February)

163. On 20 February, it was reported that a Hamas activist had been killed the previous night after being shot in Nablus earlier in the day. IDF declined to comment on Palestinian claims that Madani had been gunned down by army snipers positioned on the Mt. Gerizim outpost and Israeli security personnel positioned on a nearby road as he walked from the mosque to a grocery store in the Balata refugee camp on the outskirts of Nablus. Madani's brother, Noor, 21, said he was walking with him when the shooting began. He told reporters that his brother had called out that he had been hit and attempted to crawl out of the line of fire. Madani was taken to a local hospital in critical condition, suffering from four bullet wounds to the upper body, and died several hours later. The Palestinians claimed Madani was the fifteenth political activist targeted by Israel in its "assassination policy" in the territories. IDF admitted carrying out a number of operations in recent months to "eliminate those

involved in terror attacks against Israeli civilians and soldiers". (*Jerusalem Post*, 20 February)

164. On 22 February, it was reported that villagers in the predominantly Christian village of Beit Jala the previous day had buried 18-year-old Osama Masalma, who had died two days earlier after an IDF tank shell had struck his home. Soldiers on the slopes of Gilo had fired tank shells and light weapons during an offensive against armed Tanzim taking up shooting positions in the village. It was the first time IDF had initiated an attack against Beit Jala rather than responding only after being shot at. During the barrage, two buildings had been damaged and eight Palestinians had been wounded. Masalma had been killed when the building collapsed on top of him, Palestinians said. In Beit Fajar IDF reopened the road to allow the villagers to use it after they protested that the situation forced them to travel on dangerous alternative routes. The army also reopened the road in Beit Jala leading to the nearby hospital after residents complained. (*Jerusalem Post*, 22 February)

165. On 26 February, it was reported that in Hebron, IDF had reinforced its presence amid tensions as residents marked the anniversary of the massacre of 29 Muslim worshippers by Baruch Goldstein at the Cave of the Patriarchs in 1994. Reports from Hebron said that IDF snipers had shot a 17-year-old Palestinian in the abdomen after a firebomb and stones were thrown at the Jewish neighbourhood. Palestinians also reported later that Mahmud Jaled, 45, had been killed during a firefight in Tulkarm. IDF said it had no information on fatalities and would only say that a man had been shot after soldiers identified him as being armed in an area where shots were being fired at troops. (*Jerusalem Post*, 26 February)

166. On 28 February, it was reported that while clashes in the West Bank focused around Ramallah, stone-throwing demonstrators had converged on the Karni crossing into the Gaza Strip. Palestinian reports said that soldiers had opened fire and struck a 13-year-old boy in the head. Dr. Moadiya Hassanein, spokesman for Gaza's Shifa Hospital, told Reuters the boy was in critical condition. IDF said that a "Palestinian mob" had rioted at the crossing, but denied that troops had opened fire. (*Jerusalem Post*, 28 February)

167. On 1 March, it was reported that in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian police and hospital officials had reported that a five-year-old girl had been struck in the thigh by Israeli gunfire the previous morning as she played near the entrance to a kindergarten, according to Reuters. The IDF spokesman said that soldiers near the village of Abasan had been ambushed and returned fire. Soldiers reported they did not detect any casualties on the Palestinian side. In related news, it was reported that Palestinians in El-Bira had buried Naim Badarin, 50, who they said was killed when his house was hit by a tank shell during a firefight near the Ayosh junction two days earlier. (*Jerusalem Post*, 1 March)

168. On 4 March, it was reported that four Palestinians, including a nine-year-old boy, had been killed in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip over the previous weekend and a fifth had died from wounds sustained earlier in the week. Hundreds attended the funeral of nine-year-old Obayeh Mahmoud Daraj of El Bireh, who had been shot in his home during an intense gun battle between Palestinians in El Bireh and Ramallah and IDF soldiers at Psagot that continued for several hours in the afternoon and again later in the evening. According to Palestinian reports, Daraj was sitting with his father in his bedroom in the family's apartment when a bullet struck his shoulder and entered his chest. He was taken to hospital in Ramallah and died shortly thereafter. Abdel Karim Abu Asba, 23, of the Kalandia camp south of Ramallah, was buried the previous day. He died after being caught in the exchange of gunfire Friday evening as he was returning to his home. In Gaza, Mohammed Hels, 13, of the Sujayah neighbourhood in Gaza, was buried the previous day after he died from wounds sustained the previous Tuesday as he passed the Al-Muntar crossing in the Gaza Strip. Also in Gaza, hundreds attended the funeral of Mustafa Ramlawi, 42, who had been shot at 1 a.m. that Friday morning by soldiers who suspected he was planting a bomb on the Karni-Netzarim road. Ramlawi's family claimed that he was mentally disturbed. Palestinian hospital officials said the previous night that IDF troops had shot dead a 43-year-old Palestinian woman in Ramallah. The official said Aydeh Efteehe had been struck in the abdomen by a bullet of the same calibre used by IDF machine guns. IDF said that a gun battle had been going on near El-Bireh, where Efteehe was shot. The army could not confirm the death, but said Palestinian gunmen had opened fire on Psagot and that soldiers had returned fire. (*Jerusalem Post*, 4 March)

169. On 9 March, Palestinians reported the deployment of additional IDF tanks the previous

morning in the Ramallah area, especially around the village of Surda, which had been the scene of escalated violence in recent days, including shooting attacks and bombs detonated near IDF soldiers. Israeli army sources said the tanks had been deployed due to the increase in violence, in addition to trenches and blocked roads in the area, in an attempt to bring about a halt to the shooting attacks on Israeli civilians and soldiers. (*Jerusalem Post*, 9 March)

170. On 11 March, it was reported that one Palestinian had been killed in the Gaza Strip and 30 wounded in clashes with soldiers there and in the West Bank. Almost all of the casualties had occurred two days earlier, another declared "day of rage". In related news, it was reported that three Israelis had been remanded by the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court on suspicion of involvement in the shooting of a 45-year-old Palestinian. Hani Najer was taken to Soroka Hospital in Beersheba with moderate to serious wounds after he was shot in the abdomen while tending his herd close to the Magen David farm near Sussiya. Police and an IDF tracker searched the area. Palestinian eyewitnesses to the shooting claim a settler came from the farm, shot Najer and fled. The court banned publication of the three suspects' names and addresses. Meanwhile, Ziyad Ayad, 27, was shot and killed by soldiers who spotted him on the Karni-Netzarim road late that Friday night. The IDF spokesman said the soldiers feared Ayad planned to carry out an attack, especially as regulations barred Palestinians from using the road. IDF informed the Palestinian Authority and coordinated with it to send an ambulance to remove Ayad's body. The road had been closed to Palestinian traffic for several weeks. Also the previous day, several Jewish settlers in Hebron caused a fracas and threw stones at local Palestinians in the market, forcing soldiers to intervene to disperse them. (*Jerusalem Post*, 11 March)

171. On 12 March, it was reported that the Public Committee against Torture had demanded the previous day that the army court-martial soldiers involved in the killings of two Palestinian youths in Gaza the previous month. It also complained that the military police investigations unit was investigating only 4 of the 325 incidents in which Palestinians had been killed since the beginning of the intifada. The letters were addressed to Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein, Judge Advocate-General Menahem Finkelstein, and Colonel Miki Barel, head of military police investigations. The first case involved Ibrahim Amur, 14, who was shot and killed on 3 February 2001 in the Gaza Strip. He was reportedly walking in the vicinity of a school situated near Kfar Darom when a sniper shot him in the abdomen. According to soldiers who witnessed the shooting, Amur had done nothing to provoke the soldiers. According to the Jerusalem weekly *Kol Ha'ir*, which first reported the incident, the sniper was tried in a disciplinary court before Givati Brigade commander Col. Lior Shalev, who sentenced him to 49 days in jail. The other case involved Iman Abu Hawalli, 16, who was allegedly shot and killed from "point-blank range" on 9 February 2001 when he approached a group of Givati soldiers. The soldier who killed Hawalli testified that he had opened fire in accordance with open-fire regulations and aimed at the lower part of Hawalli's body. Hawalli, however, was struck in the upper part of his body. An inquiry found that the soldiers had acted according to regulations. The Public Committee against Torture said it was inconceivable that such cases should be investigated and tried according to disciplinary, rather than criminal procedures. Military sources noted that IDF had altered its open-fire regulations as a result of redefining its conflict with the Palestinians as an "armed struggle short of war." Israel believed that that absolved it of any claims for compensation for damage caused by the conflict and allowed it to increase its firepower according to international law. "We very rarely open investigations into shootings", said one senior IDF officer. To date the IDF had investigated only four cases of shooting violations and another 20 were pending. (*Jerusalem Post*, 12 March)

172. On 15 March, it was reported that Ahmed Bannar, 19, had been shot by soldiers near Karni, in the Gaza Strip. The IDF spokesman denied the Palestinian claims and said Bannar had been spotted holding a metal object and running towards an IDF post on the Karni-Netzarim road. He jumped the fence surrounding the post and soldiers fired warning shots in the air and, when he ignored their warnings, fired one shot at his legs. Hospital officials in Gaza said Bannar had been shot in the back while he was walking on the street. (*Jerusalem Post*, 15 March)

173. On 16 March, it was reported that in Hebron five Palestinian children had been lightly wounded from a stun grenade thrown by soldiers to disperse stone-throwers at an elementary school. Palestinians said the grenade had landed in the schoolyard during a break and that the children were taken to the local hospital

for treatment for burns. The IDF spokesman, however, said that the children suffered from shock. The soldiers had thrown the stun grenade at a group of stone-throwers and had not targeted the children, the army added. (*Jerusalem Post*, 16 March)

174. On 18 March, it was reported that Mohammed Abu Awn, 20, of Gaza, had been killed in violence on Friday, 18 March 2001, near the Karni crossing and scores had been injured in clashes that took place in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on the second "day of rage" called by the intifada leadership. Hundreds of Palestinians had participated in demonstrations in Ramallah, Nablus, at El Khader and Qalqilya. (*Jerusalem Post*, 18 March)

175. On 25 March, it was reported that thousands of Palestinians had marched in protest against Israeli restrictions over the weekend. The relatively peaceful marches by women, academics and journalists were in addition to clashes with troops throughout Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, in which scores of Palestinians had been wounded. IDF denied Palestinian claims that soldiers had shot and killed a Palestinian policeman on Friday near Kfar Darom, noting that soldiers had not opened fire in the area. The previous night a 30-year-old Palestinian had been killed near El Aroub by soldi ... responding to Palestinian gunfire and two firebombs thrown at them. Israeli soldiers fatally wounded a 30-year-old Palestinian at El Aroub. A Magen David Adom team unsuccessfully attempted to revive him at the scene. Palestinian demonstrators clashed with soldiers the previous day at the A-Ram junction north of Jerusalem. A soldier wounded during the confrontation was later brought to a Jerusalem hospital. In Halhoul, Palestinian women marched to protest against the continued closure, while in Gaza hundreds demonstrated, with calls to "free Jerusalem" and continue the struggle. Scores of Palestinians also demonstrated at the Netzarim junction. (*Jerusalem Post*, 25 March)

176. On 28 March, it was reported that IDF soldiers had shot dead an 11-year-old Palestinian boy the previous night during an exchange of fire near the village of Dura south of Hebron, according to the boy's family. Doctors in a Hebron hospital said Mahmoud Daraweesh had been shot in the heart. A cousin said the boy had been standing on the roof of his house in Dura watching an exchange of fire between Palestinian gunmen and Israeli soldiers when he was shot from the Israeli position. IDF said it had no information on the death, but confirmed that soldiers had traded fire with Palestinian gunmen in the area. (*Jerusalem Post*, 28 March)

177. On 29 March, it was reported that IDF had launched attacks on five Force 17 bases in the Gaza Strip and Ramallah, stating firmly that there would be additional operations. Air force helicopters rocketed Force 17 headquarters in Ramallah near the Palestinian Legislative Council building, a base near Jabalya, an arsenal near the Antsar camp close to Gaza City, a training base in south Gaza and an armoured vehicle depot. IDF stressed that the air strikes were only part of its plans to directly harm those specifically responsible for terror attacks. Initial Palestinian reports said one Force 17 officer and a woman from Beituniya had been killed in Ramallah and scores had been wounded in the Gaza strikes. Prior to the attacks the Palestinians had begun evacuating security establishments in several West Bank and Gaza Strip cities. Following the air raid, hundreds of Palestinians took to the streets in Ramallah and claimed that there were power outages in the city and also in Gaza. Security forces said future operations would include targeting specific terrorists who planned and perpetrated terror attacks. (*Jerusalem Post*, 29 March)

178. On 30 March, it was reported that IDF tanks the previous night had shelled a building in the Abu Sneneh neighbourhood of Hebron after soldiers claimed to have spotted two armed Palestinians entering it. In Gaza, soldiers had shot and killed a Force 17 policeman who they claimed had fired at IDF positions at Netzarim and attempted to approach the Jewish settlement nearby. Later in the day, Palestinians said, soldiers had killed Mohammed Abu Shamla, 16, and Mahmoud Abu Shada, 15, during clashes near the Erez industrial site. Hundreds of Palestinians clashed with soldiers at the site throughout the day. Soldiers responded with tear gas and rubber bullets, then fired warning shots in the air and later aimed at the legs. Clashes between Palestinians and soldiers also occurred on the Karni-Netzarim road. (*Jerusalem Post*, 30 March)

179. On 1 April, it was reported that thousands of Palestinians had marched the previous day at funerals of six men killed on Friday, 30 March, by IDF during violent clashes, while another Palestinian had died from injuries suffered during an Israeli helicopter attack against targets in Ramallah on 29 March. In an interview during the weekend, Defence Minister

Binyamin Bin-Eliezer reiterated on television that the "period of Israeli restrain has come to an end". According to IDF sources, the plans for action against the Palestinian Authority included both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and involved "surgical strikes" against senior activists of the Palestinian Authority and other organizations. IDF sources said that three of the Palestinians had been killed by rubber-coated bullets, while two others, in Nablus, had been killed during the preparation of an explosive device in the Balata refugee camp. Palestinian sources rejected those claims and said that IDF had opened fire with live ammunition after the demonstrators had begun dispersing. They also said that two of the victims had been killed by machine-gun fire from an Israeli tank positioned to overlook the demonstrations. In another development, it was reported that, the previous day, IDF tanks had fired shots at targets in Hebron and in Tulkarm. Palestinian sources said that at least 27 people had been treated for shrapnel wounds as a result of the tank attacks. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 1 April)

180. On 3 April, it was reported that air force Apache helicopters had fired three missiles into the pick-up truck of Mahmoud Abed, 29, an Islamic Jihad activist in Rafah in the Gaza Strip the previous noon, killing him instantly. There were unconfirmed reports that a passenger in the vehicle had been seriously wounded. According to Palestinians who witnessed the attack, four helicopters hovered overhead and two of them fired missiles at his truck. Salim Abu Yedin told Reuters that "the first hit the rear of the car and, as he struggled to get out, another two missiles hit, turning it into a ball of flames". Security officials noted that the operation was designed to harm those who perpetrated attacks against Israelis. They said they would continue targeting terrorists and Palestinian officials involved in attacks. Hundreds attended Abed's funeral. In another development, it was reported that seven Palestinians had been wounded and an Israeli soldier killed following an exchange of fire in Bethlehem. Clouds of white smoke rose above the city as Israeli tanks shells slammed into the Paradise Hotel, which was heavily damaged. It was reported that the IDF had closed all roads leading from Bethlehem to the surrounding Palestinian villages. In Hebron, settlers and Israeli army were blaming "outside extremist Jews" for a bombing that destroyed a Palestinian grocery and several other shops, slightly injuring six soldiers. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 3 April)

181. On 4 April, it was reported that helicopters and tanks had retaliated the previous night in Gaza after one of three home-made mortars had fired into the Atzmona settlement, just over the border in Gush Katif from Rafah, critically wounding 15-month-old Ariel Yered and wounding his mother, Lea. The targets selected for the attacks, which had been ordered by Defence Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, were Force 17 buildings, including a building rocketed the previous week near Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's home in Gaza. Arafat was in Ramallah at the time of the retaliation, which came within hours of the Atzmona mortar attacks. Ramallah itself was not targeted, but Israeli tanks destroyed a Force 17 residence building in nearby Betunia, Palestinians said. The building had been empty. Some 30 Palestinians, including policemen, were wounded in the half-hour assault, Palestinian doctors said. At least seven Apache and Cobra helicopter gunships were visible hovering in the night sky in Gaza City, and Israeli tanks were also used in the attacks on Gaza, Dir el Balah and Rafiah. For the first time in such a retaliation, an elite infantry unit was also involved, firing long-range anti-tank missiles at selected targets. The mortar attack the previous day directed at Atzmona, in southern Gaza, apparently had come from nearby Rafah. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 4 April)

182. On 6 April, it was reported that West Bank Islamic Jihad leader Iyad Hardan had been killed the previous afternoon when a device exploded as he spoke on his usual pay phone, just outside the Palestinian jail where he was being held. Without directly admitting Israel was responsible, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said his Government would wage a constant struggle against terrorism. "Sometimes we will announce what we did, sometimes we will not announce what we did", he told a political meeting in Tel Aviv. "We don't always have to announce it." It was considered that the recent developments might mark a resumption of the tension between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, after a relatively promising meeting between Israeli and Palestinian military leaders the previous Wednesday. In another incident, after a meeting between Israeli and Palestinian military leaders, IDF soldiers had opened fire at the Palestinian convoy carrying the Palestinian leaders returning to the Gaza Strip. Three Palestinian security men had sustained light injuries. Chairman of General Palestinian Intelligence, Amin Al-Hindi, accused Chief of Staff Shaul Mofaz of a deliberate assassination attempt.

Israel denied this, saying the IDF investigation indicated it was the Palestinian bodyguards who had fired first. Israeli sources, however, questioned the IDF version and said that the soldiers had probably misidentified the source of fire, or responded excessively to a stray Palestinian bullet. The assassinated Hardan had stood at the top of the most wanted list in the West Bank. In another development, it was reported that a 15-year-old Palestinian had been killed and nine other teens wounded when Palestinian children, marking a memorial day for children killed in the intifada, had approached an IDF barricade near Netzarim and begun throwing stones towards the soldiers. An IDF spokesman said that soldiers on the scene reported only firing in the air. A similar demonstration at the Erez junction resulted in 10 youths being slightly wounded, while near Tulkarm, a children's day demonstration resulted in the wounding of three youths by rubber-coated steel bullets. And in another shooting incident, Palestinian reports said IDF troops had opened fire on east Beit Sahour, with bullets reaching the YMCA building on the town's main road, the main north-south route for Palestinians travelling in the West Bank. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 6 April)

183. On 9 April, it was reported that IDF had fired anti-tank missiles at targets in the Gaza Strip the previous day in response to Palestinians firing mortars against an army base in Nahal Oz, inside the Green Line. Palestinian sources said that at least four people had been injured. In another development, Palestinian media sources claimed over the weekend that Mahmoud Haridat, a 58-year-old farmer from the village of Beit A-Rut al-Oulya, south-west of Hebron, found dead in his field, had been beaten to death by Israeli border guard policemen. An autopsy conducted on orders of the Hebron district attorney showed that he had died of a heart attack. IDF had shelled a number of Palestinian Authority security and civilian buildings in Ramallah that Saturday night. Palestinian Authority sources denied that the Palestinian shooting had preceded the shelling. About 70 Palestinian protesters had been injured over the weekend in clashes with IDF soldiers. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 9 April)

184. On 10 April, it was reported that a Palestinian had been killed near Ramallah and that an Israeli had been wounded near Bethlehem the previous day. A 19-month-old Palestinian baby was in critical condition after being hit by an IDF rubber-coated steel bullet. Taiser al-Amouri, 45, was killed the previous morning during a firefight between Israeli and Palestinian forces near Bitounia, south-west of Ramallah. He was apparently a bystander caught in the exchange. According to a relative, he was brain damaged as a result of a beating by Israeli soldiers 20 years earlier. Al-Amouri was buried in El Bireh. In Hebron, firebombs were thrown and the IDF used rubber-coated steel bullets and tear gas to break up a Palestinian demonstration near Kikar Gross. A 19-month-old Palestinian girl had been critically wounded by IDF fire the previous Sunday night. During a brief recess in the fighting at al Khader, the child's parents and brothers had been hurrying home. The father was carrying her in his arms when a rubber-coated steel bullet struck her in the head. Witnesses said the soldiers had fired from short range. According to one version of the events, some youths in the area had begun throwing stones at some soldiers, prompting the shooting. (*Ha'aretz*, 10 April)

185. On 11 April, it was reported that the "mortar war" between Israel and the Palestinian Authority had continued in the Gaza Strip the previous day with the firing of seven mortars at Israeli targets. In response, IDF had attacked three targets of the Palestinian security forces in the Gaza Strip. A Palestinian doctor working for the Palestinian Authority's naval forces was killed by the IDF missiles and 20 others were wounded. The missiles at Sudaniya struck around 9.30 a.m., killing a doctor, Wail Hawatir, 28, and injuring the clinic director, Rasan al-Nabatawi, 50. Ten others were injured, including a Palestinian officer holding the rank of colonel. The building at Sudaniya served primarily as a medical facility for the Palestinian navy. At the same time, the missiles struck their target at Dir al-Balah, injuring 18 Palestinians, members of the Palestinian Authority's military intelligence. Witnesses said that the two-story structure was badly damaged. (*Ha'aretz*, 10 April)

186. On 12 April, It was reported that Israel the previous day had sent tanks and bulldozers into the Khan Yunis refugee camp, flattening homes in the first sustained ground assault in the nearly seven-month-old Palestinian uprising. Some 25 houses were destroyed and at least two Palestinians were killed, while 50 were wounded in a lengthy firefight that ensued as army bulldozers knocked down the row of houses facing the IDF base in Gush Katif, 350 metres away. The force included tanks and armoured personnel carriers, as well as engineering corps units, bulldozers and troops.

According to Palestinian sources the bulldozers cleared large sand bags and an olive grove while the tanks took positions at two ends of the street to protect them. Moving down the street, the tanks fired machine guns to clear the area to defenders while the bulldozers razed 28 homes. With the entry of the IDF troops into Area A, loudspeakers throughout Khan Yunis called on residents to repel what was called "the attempted Israeli invasion". Dozens of armed men and hundreds of civilians rushed to the scene and for three hours the bulldozers worked to reduce the houses to rubble while Palestinians fired on the soldiers in protected vehicles. The camp's power supply was severed, cloaking the clash in near total darkness. About a dozen other homes bore the scars of the battle, their walls chipped by heavy machine-gun bullets. Broken television sets, washing machines and refrigerators jutted from the rubble of crudely built mud and cement homes. Fatima Abulowz, 30, sat on a mattress outside her destroyed home with her 15-month-old daughter in her arms. "This is all I have left", she said pointing to the rubble. "All my belongings, my money, my jewelry is buried in there." During the firefights, a 50-year-old major in the Palestinian security services and a 25-year-old Palestinian man were killed. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 12 April)

187. On 13 April, it was reported that a car bomb had exploded the previous day in Ramallah, without causing any injuries. According to Palestinian sources, the bomb appeared to be an Israeli attempt on the life of Tanzim activist Nasser Abu Hamid. But Israeli sources, refusing to confirm or deny Israeli involvement, suggested that Abu Hamid might have been targeted as a result of internecine conflicts among Palestinian groups. In related news, it was reported that in a day of clashes in the territories, one Palestinian youth had been killed and three soldiers wounded. A 14-year-old Palestinian boy had been shot and killed near the village of Beit Umar near Hebron the previous night. Palestinians said there had been no clashes, but IDF said a Palestinian had tried to throw a firebomb at an Israeli civilian bus and soldiers had shot at him, prompting an exchange of fire. In another incident in Khan Yunis, a 35-year-old Palestinian taxi driver was killed by Israeli fire and his passenger slightly wounded. In the West Bank the previous day, only four shooting incidents had occurred by 10 p.m. In one, on the Tunnel road between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, a soldier was wounded by Palestinian machine-gun fire from a nearby hilltop at an outpost of soldiers. The IDF soldiers fired back and the soldier, wounded in the jaw, was evacuated to Hadassah Hospital at Ein Kerem. (*Ha'aretz*, 13 April)

188. On 15 April, it was reported that clashes had broken out within Rafiah, in the Gaza Strip, the night before between IDF and members of the Palestinian national security forces. The exchange of gunfire lasted more than two hours. Palestinian sources told *Ha'aretz* that the attack on Israeli military forces had begun after IDF had broken into an area under Palestinian control. The IDF force, consisting of three tanks and two bulldozers, destroyed a Palestinian military intelligence position a few metres from the border fence, as well as another 16 structures in the area. Some 35 Palestinians, including 11 children and two women, were injured in the gunfight; four of the injured were in serious condition, Palestinian sources reported the previous night. Israeli military forces also fired on Palestinian security positions in Salfit and the area of Jenin in the West Bank over the weekend, according to Palestinian sources. On Friday night, the sources added, clashes had also broken out between IDF and Palestinians in the area of El Khader, south of Jerusalem. Seven Palestinians had been injured by IDF gunfire, the sources said. Clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians had taken place over the weekend in Qalqilya, where a tight IDF closure had been in place since the start of the intifada. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 15 April)

189. On 17 April, it was reported that, following the Israeli assault on the Gaza Strip the previous night, a 24-year-old Palestinian policeman had been killed. Hospital sources said that at least 27 people had been wounded in the attack. In related news, Palestinian sources blamed Israel the previous day for what they allege was a failed attempt on the life of a Fatah activist, Abd al-Hadi Natshe, in an area of Hebron known as Ras al-Jura. Natshe suffered non-life-threatening injuries when shots were fired at his vehicle. The alleged assassination attempt against Natshe had occurred in Area H1, under full Palestinian Authority control. However, there was a possibility that the shots had been fired from Area H2, under Israeli control. Palestinian sources claimed that an Israeli force had fired 25 bullets at Natshe's car. He was taken to al-Ahli hospital in Hebron for treatment. Israeli security sources refused to comment on any involvement in an attempt on Natshe's life. However, they did say that Natshe was suspected of involvement

in attacks against Israeli targets in the city. The previous Thursday, the Palestinian Authority had blamed Israel for trying to assassinate a member of the Tanzim paramilitaries in Ramallah. A bomb had been planted in the man's car. Some in the Palestinian Authority raised the possibility that the attack had actually been aimed at the Fatah leader in the Ramallah area, Marwan Barghouti. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 17 April)

190. On 18 April, it was reported that three Palestinian boys had been killed by Israeli gunfire the previous day. Bara el-Shael, 10, died when Israeli soldiers opened fire on the Rafah refugee camp in Gaza, relatives and doctors said. In el-Khader, near Bethlehem in the West Bank, Rami Musa, 16, was killed when an Israeli tank shelled his home, Palestinians said. The IDF said there had been an exchange of fire at el-Khader. Another teen was killed by IDF fire in a rock-throwing clash near the Karni junction. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 18 April)

191. On 22 April, it was reported that, a reporter of Abu Dhabi television station had been injured two days earlier near Rafah in the Gaza Strip, when IDF soldiers had opened fire against Palestinian demonstrators. The reporter claimed that she had been targeted by the soldiers because she refused to leave the area after they asked her and her crew to stop filming. In related news, it was reported that the police had arrested 24 settlers in Hebron who had refused to evacuate a protest tent they had set up at the Gross square in the city. A number of left-wing activists were arrested by police as well, as they tried to deliver food and medicines to Palestinians under siege. The police argued that the arrest had occurred after the peace activists had tried to violate an order banning Israelis from entering Palestinian Authority areas. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 22 April)

192. On 24 April, it was reported that a 12-year-old Palestinian, Muhind Nizar Muharb, had been killed the previous day in Khan Yunis, in the Gaza Strip, when IDF soldiers opened fire on Palestinian demonstrators at the funeral of a Force 17 officer. At least 10 other Palestinians had been injured. Shooting was also reported in the Gilo neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Shots were fired around noon towards IDF positions below Gilo from neighbouring Beit Jala. Minor damage was caused to one house. IDF had responded by firing on the Palestinian neighbourhood. A roadside bomb was exploded in the morning close to an Israeli bus near the Barkan industrial area, west of Ariel. The bus had been travelling along the southern section of the trans-Samaria highway. The Voice of Palestine claimed the previous day that an IDF force had entered the village of Tkua, near Bethlehem, and carried out an operation against Palestinian activists in which arrests were made. The IDF said that it had carried out a routine patrol in the village, which was part of Area B and fell under Israeli security control. Palestinian security officials also said that IDF tanks had fired against the airport at Dehaniya, damaging part of the control tower. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 24 April)

193. On 25 April, it was reported that a 40-year-old Palestinian, Yusuf Abu Hamdeh, had been killed the previous day in the northern Gaza Strip, close to the border with Israel. Abu Hamdeh was shot and killed by IDF troops as he tried to cross the fence into Israel. In an effort to prevent any terrorist attacks on Independence Day, Israel was imposing a full closure on the territories. The 4,000 Palestinian residents of the territories with permits to enter Israel for work purposes were among those who would not be permitted to cross the Green Line. Plans were however also under way to permit the entry of more Palestinian workers from the territories for work the following week. A promise to that effect had been made to Palestinian officials during a meeting with Israeli security officials. In the West Bank, medical sources said that troops had shot and killed Iyad Heresh, 27, during a clash with stone-throwing protesters near Qalqilya. The army confirmed that it had killed a Palestinian in the confrontation. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 25 April)

194. On 27 April, it was reported that four Fatah activists had been killed in an explosion near the Rafiah border crossing with Egypt in the Gaza Strip the previous Wednesday night and that six others had been injured. Palestinian Authority officials blamed Israel and called the death of the four an assassination. The previous day IDF had shot and killed a Palestinian farmer, Atef Wahdan, near the Al-Bureij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. Thousands of Palestinians attended the funeral of the four Fatah men, shouting angry slogans and vowing to step up the Al-Aqsa Intifada. Israel denied the Palestinian claims, while Israel Army Radio said the four had died in what IDF termed a "work accident" — preparing a bomb. Israeli sources said the incident had occurred when a group of 10 Palestinians had walked approximately 500 metres

from the border crossing before there was an explosion, killing four of the group. The other six had been injured; two of them were in serious condition. One of the dead was Ramadan Azzam, 31, head of the "Popular Resistance Committees", a local organization of the Fatah believed to be responsible for some of the mortar firing against Israeli targets. Two of the other dead, Samir Zurub, 32, and Saadi Dabas, 35, were members of the Palestinian security forces, while the fourth bomb victim, Yasser Dabas, was a 16-year-old civilian. A Palestinian policeman who gave his name as Younis said that Israel had planted the bomb because the gunmen had previously shot at Israeli tanks patrolling the border. "Children saw it, it was covered by cement, so they started to jump on it. The gunmen shot at it from a distance but it didn't explode. When the other people had left and only the gunmen were close, it was detonated by remote control", he said. A Palestinian health official had confirmed on Thursday that another Palestinian, Ibrahim Abu Awaila, 20, had died from wounds suffered in an Israeli raid against the Khan Younis refugee camp earlier in the month. Abu Awaila died in a Cairo hospital where he was being treated. Israel's fifty-third Independence Day passed with relatively few incidents. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 27 April)

195. On 29 April, it was reported that a Palestinian man had been killed the night before in an exchange of gunfire near Rachel's Tomb in the Bethlehem area. Hassan Karakai, a 34-year-old Fatah member, was killed by IDF gunfire, Palestinian sources reported. Two other men in his car were also wounded by IDF bullets, the sources added. Heavy fighting on the Gaza Strip and West Bank the previous Friday had resulted in injuries to a number of Palestinian demonstrators. Palestinian gunmen and IDF troops clashed at the Ayosh junction, north of Ramallah; seven Palestinians were hurt, Palestinian sources claimed. And Palestinians reported that 11 demonstrators had been wounded in clashes with IDF that Friday at the Karni border crossing to Gaza. According to an Israeli security source, the weekend mortar attacks were in response to the deaths of four Fatah men in an explosion the previous Wednesday evening in Rafah. Palestinian Authority officials blamed Israel for the explosion: General Abd al-Razeq al-Mujaida, head of national security in the Gaza Strip, said that the four had been killed by a bomb the IDF had concealed around boulders marking the border at Rafah. Israel did not respond to the charges. (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, 29 April)

5. Aspects of the administration of justice

196. On 14 September, it was reported that the High Court the day before had stated that a prisoner had no right to hear a discussion about his right to consult an attorney. The Court rejected a petition submitted on behalf of a Gaza resident, security prisoner Raduan Haraz, 29, by a human rights group, the Public Committee against Torture. Haraz, a chemical engineer, had been detained in November 1999 when he returned to Israel after completing studies in the Syrian Arab Republic. He was suspected of engaging in illegal activities for Hamas and had been held in prison since his arrest. Represented by attorney Andre Rosenthal, the anti-torture group argued that legal procedures required the courts, including the High Court, to discuss matters concerning a criminal suspect only when the suspect was present. The organization also argued that a suspect's right to meet with an attorney was a basic right. Rejecting the argument, Supreme Court President Aharon Barak wrote: "In the circumstances of this case, the reasons which justified the prevention of a meeting between Haraz and an attorney also warrant the holding of a hearing in his absence." The human rights organization criticized the High Court's decision to keep Haraz away from his lawyer. Organization director Hannah Friedman said, "It's very sad that wanton violations of human rights, such as stopping a meeting between a suspect and a lawyer and holding legal hearings without the suspect being present, are regarded as being self-evident and permissible in Israel." Friedman added that these exceptional procedures were contrary to international law and the spirit of Israel's legal system. (*Ha'aretz*, 14 September)

C. Economic, social and cultural effects that such a general system of regulation and the manner of its enforcement has on the lives of the people of the occupied territories

197. On 18 August, it was reported that most of the budget set aside for the development of the infrastructure in East Jerusalem had been frozen since Prime Minister Ehud Barak had come to power some 18 months earlier. When former Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu was in power, funds had been released regularly for that purpose. A total of 60 million shekels had been earmarked for the development of infrastructure in East Jerusalem in 1999, but the Government had released only 18 million. Many projects that had been planned, such as water distribution and sanitation systems, roads, pavements and street lighting systems in various neighbourhoods and villages in East Jerusalem, had still not been carried out. In many cases, work that had begun had been interrupted: roads and pavements had not been laid, classrooms had not been built and the construction of community centres had been interrupted. The gap between the services and infrastructure which the State made available to residents of the city's Jewish neighbourhoods and those enjoyed by the Arabs of East Jerusalem was considerable, with the level of funding sometimes being almost double. For the sake of comparison, in West Jerusalem, some 743 residents shared 1 kilometre of sewage piping; whereas in the east of the city, the same length of piping was shared by around 2,809 people. West Jerusalem contained around 680 kilometres of paved roads — 710 residents per kilometre — while East Jerusalem had only 87 kilometres — 2,448 residents per kilometre. (*Ha'aretz*, 18 August)

198. On 17 November, it was reported that the Israeli Government was about to impose economic sanctions against the Palestinian Authority. It was reported that the IDF had been ordered not to allow any goods to enter the Palestinian territories, apart from food and medicines. Prime Minister Ehud Barak also had said the day before that Israel was withholding millions of dollars in tax revenues owed to the Palestinian Authority. He said that the transfers had been halted as part of Israel's demand that the Palestinians start honouring their agreements. Palestinian and foreign sources said that the economic agreement signed between Israel and the Palestinian Authority did not include any provision for freezing funds. "Holding back the transfer of taxes and other funds owed to the Palestinian Authority will only add to the serious economic damage that the lengthy closure is causing in the territories", said Joseph Saba, the representative of the World Bank in the territories. "Severe distress and poverty will be the fate of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian families, and the health and the education sector will be hardest hit." At the beginning of November 2000, Israel was supposed to have transferred some NIS 114 million to the Palestinian Authority, primarily in rebates on VAT and custom duties. In practice, however, only NIS 30 million had been transferred. In related news, it was reported that a significant economic hardship resulting from the closure and trade-blockage policies could be felt around the Palestinian territories. According to IDF sources, IDF soldiers had not been strictly enforcing the no-merchandise orders at all check-posts, but shortage of various non-food items were apparent in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. (*Ha'aretz*, 17 November)

199. On 14 February 2001, it was reported that at a news conference in Gaza, United Nations special peace envoy Tarje Larsen had told reporters that Israel's blockade of the Palestinian areas had caused the Palestinian economy to lose $1.5 billion, and if it continued, it could lead to the collapse of Palestinian institutions. A senior Palestinian official agreed with the assessment, saying that much of what the Palestinians had built up over the past seven years had been destroyed. Larsen said the Palestinian economy had lost about 20 per cent of its projected annual gross national product. Unemployment in the Palestinian areas had risen from 11 per cent to 38 per cent and average annual per capita income had fallen from $2,000 to $1,700. Thousands of workers who used to enter Israel for work were prohibited from doing so due to closure imposed by the IDF following the outbreak of the current intifada. Since most workers had families to support, about 29 per cent of the population was directly affected by the high unemployment rate. Larsen stated that "Palestinian institutions are running out of funds and are unable to pay salaries or finance their activities." He stated that in some Palestinian villages 50 per cent of the population was living in poverty, meaning that they spent less than NIS 9 per person a day. Since the outbreak of the intifada, there had been a 50 per cent increase in the number of people living in poverty. (*Jerusalem Post*, 14 February)

200. On 24 March, it was reported that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had rejected European requests to transfer to the Palestinian Authority tax levies withheld by Israel, saying that asking Israel to transfer money to the Palestinian Authority that would be used to pay salaries for members of various Palestinian security forces engaged in terror was "unethical". Sharon made the comment during talks he held with a high-level European Union delegation that had come to the region

to see what could be done to strengthen the Palestinian economy. The delegation, during separate meetings with Sharon and Peres, called upon Israel to relieve the economic pressure on the Palestinians. (*Jerusalem Post*, 24 March)

201. On 9 April, it was reported that according to the Palestinian Minister of Finance, the Palestinian economy had lost more than $20 billion in trade and wages in the previous six months since the intifada had begun and that unemployment had risen above 50 per cent as a result of the Israeli closures. The Minister, Maher al-Masri, said that even if the restrictions were lifted, it would take the Palestinians years to repair the damage. "The economy is in a shambles", al-Masri told a news conference. Palestinian economist Samir Hulaileh said that if the situation remained unchanged, two thirds of the more than 1 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip could be living below the poverty line by the end of the year. In February, the United Nations had said that one in three Palestinians was poor, living on less than $2.10 a day, compared to one in five six months earlier, when the Israeli-Palestinian fighting had begun. During the previous six months, Israel had also confined Palestinians in the West Bank to their communities for extended periods and had periodically prevented travel between parts of the Gaza Strip. Hulaileh said business had decreased by 60 per cent to 70 per cent. The closures had forced factories to reduce their rate of production, either because materials were not available or because products could not be distributed in the market. Masri said the Palestinian economy had lost more than $20 billion since September 2000, but did not provide a detailed breakdown. According to the United Nations, the Palestinian gross domestic product had lost half its value, or $8.6 million, for each working day. Unemployment had risen to more than 50 per cent, from 11 per cent in 2000, Palestinian officials said. (*Jerusalem Post*, 9 April)

D. Situation of human rights in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan

202. On 26 September 2000, it was reported that Golan Heights civic leaders were beginning to focus more on developing the region and increasing its Jewish population than on fighting to keep the Golan under Israeli rule. "This is happening because it seems to us that the future of the Golan is more secure than ever", said Katzrin Local Council head Sammy Bar-Lev. In addition to the dozens of new homes being offered for sale in the township, with a current population of 7,000, a new centre with a sound-and-light show depicting Katzrin's Talmudic history had been inaugurated the previous day. Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg had been the guest of honour at the official opening of the "Talmudic Experience" (*Havaya Talmudit*) centre adjoining the remains of the ancient synagogue in the Katzrin antiquities park. Some 56 homes, still in the first stages of construction, had been put on the market the day before, in addition to the 96 that had already been built on the new Savyon Katzrin estate. Most of the latter had already been sold. The construction firm that won the tender to build the homes was involved in development projects across the Golan, including other homes and an educational centre. (*Jerusalem Post*, 26 September)

203. On 1 November, it was reported that following the failed diplomatic negotiations with the Syrian Arab Republic, plans for the construction of additional housing units and the implementation of infrastructure repairs in the Golan Heights had been put back on track. The plans included construction of some 1,500 housing units in the town of Katzrin, environmental surveys for building on the slopes of the Golan and repairs to sewage and water infrastructures. (*Ha'aretz*, 1 November)

E. Other

204. On 2 November 2000, it was reported that Israel channel 2 TV reporter Suliman a-Shafi had been detained the previous day at the Erez crossing after completing his daily reporting from Gaza. He was interrogated for four hours before being released on bail. According to a-Shafi, the police officer who interrogated him demanded that he sign an undertaking not to enter the Gaza Strip for the next three months. A-Shafi, a resident of the Palestinian town of Rahat (Israel proper), had been working in the Gaza Strip since the beginning of the current wave of violence and was the only Israeli reporter regularly reporting on the clashes from inside the Strip. IDF officers who first detained a-Shafi accused him of breaking an order by the Commander of the Southern Command forbidding Israeli citizens from entering the Palestinian territories. "I told them that I know nothing of such an order, but I was still handed over to the police for interrogations. I

view my detention as a breach of freedom of the press. I was interrogated for hours and asked questions regarding my work. Apparently, military officials are trying to prevent my entrance into Gaza because they do not want journalistic coverage during operational activity. Apparently they have something to hide." (*Ha'aretz*, 2 November)

205. On 16 January 2001, it was reported that the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) had documented over two dozen instances of journalists being injured or harassed while covering the violence in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip since late September. Thirteen of the journalists had been wounded by gunfire while covering clashes between Palestinians and IDF troops. In 10 cases they had been shot by IDF troops. The source of the gunfire was unclear in the remaining three cases, though reporters on the scene blamed soldiers. The CPJ report expressed particular concern regarding seven cases in which journalists either charged that they had been intentionally targeted by Israeli forces or where the circumstances had raised concerns that IDF was at least guilty of extreme negligence. According to the CPJ report, there had also been three cases in which working journalists had been severely beaten by IDF troops or undercover agents, while two journalists were arrested or summoned by Israeli authorities for questioning in response to their coverage of recent events. (*Jerusalem Post*, 16 November)

206. On 14 March, it was reported that the father of Hilmi Shousha, the 11-year-old Palestinian boy killed by Nahum Korman, had petitioned the High Court of Justice against a plea bargain arrangement sentencing Korman to six months of community service. Knesset member Ahmed Tibi (Arab Movement for Renewal) and the Public Committee against Torture joined Ta'ar Shousha in calling on the court to order Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein and State Attorney Edna Arbel to cancel the arrangement reached on 20 January. The petitioners charged that the agreement, which had been turned into a ruling by Jerusalem District Court Judge Ruth Orr, "discriminated between Arab and Jewish blood and demonstrated that Arab blood came cheaper, much cheaper, than Jewish blood, which is thicker and worth more. Based on this ruling, it can be said with almost total certainty that from now on Arab blood will be cheaper and that it will be easier to kill an Arab than to steal a car because of the absurd punishment imposed for such a serious and criminal act." The petitioners also charged that when she handed down the light sentence, Orr claimed, as a mitigating circumstance, that Korman did not have prior convictions. In fact, they said, Korman had been convicted in 1996 of assaulting a policeman. Hilmi Shousha was killed on 27 October 1996 in the village of Husan. Prior to his death, it was claimed that local youths had stoned Israeli vehicles on a bypass road below the village. Korman, the security officer of the Jewish settlement of Betar Illit, drove to Husan armed with a pistol and headed by foot towards the houses at the edge of the village. According to witnesses who testified in the court, Korman kicked Hilmi Shousha in the thigh and temple, stomped on his neck and struck him with his pistol. The Supreme Court overruled the lower court decision, convicted Korman of manslaughter and sent the case back to the Jerusalem District Court for sentencing. The petitioners charged that the Attorney General's decision to agree to six months of community service was "extremely unreasonable" because it did not take into account the severity of Korman's crime. (*Jerusalem Post*, 14 March)

207. On 11 April, it was reported that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had stated in an interview with *Ha'aretz* the previous Friday that he had no intention, "absolutely none", of evacuating settlements, even as part of a ceasefire agreement with the Palestinians. "I do not see any reason to evacuate any settlements. So long as there is no peace, we will stay sitting there. If after some time, God willing, there will be peace, there will certainly be no reason to prevent them [the settlers] from staying there", he said. Sharon believes that the presence of Jewish settlements in the territories is of twofold importance: historical and strategic. "Is it possible at this time to relinquish control over the mountain aquifer which provides us with a third of our water? Is it possible to give up the frontier area in the Jordan valley? In any case, it's no coincidence that the settlements sit where they are. They guard both the birthplace of the Jewish people and also grant us essential strategic depth to protect our existence." Regarding an agreement with the Syrians, Sharon said: "We cannot come down from the Golan Heights." Withdrawing from the Golan or the Jordan valley would be a "real existential threat", he said. How then would Sharon respond if Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat unilaterally declared an independent State? "First, I advise him not to do that; it would be a major mistake on his part. It would demand

that we take a series of steps to keep in our hands areas essential for us." In such a case, would he annex the settlements and security zones? "Certainly. All that is needed. Therefore, I advise them not to do it. It would be a mistake." Sharon believes that "there is a need for every effort in order to reach a solution to the conflict without endangering Israel. But to say peace is knocking on our door, that is not true. I do not believe that it is possible, with a single stroke, to end a conflict that has lasted 120 years. And I do not think there is any need to set an ambitious goal, such as the immediate signing of a peace treaty". Is there a new Sharon, in ideological terms? "I have not changed my world view. The one thing that has changed is my view of Jordan as Palestine, and that only because there is a reality [on the ground] here. I never believed there should be two Palestinian States. That is the sole change that has taken place in my positions." (*Ha'aretz*, 11 April)

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General Assembly

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Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 166
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 2 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In the wake of the deadly attacks on 11 September 2001, I have the honour to request you to circulate this letter and its annex as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166.

(*Signed*) **Djangoné-Bi** Djessan Philippe
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 2 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Government communiqué

The entire world has been shaken by the wave of terrorist attacks that plunged the United States of America into mourning on Tuesday, 11 September 2001.

As in such circumstances, an official investigation was immediately launched by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It is proceeding normally.

At the same time, the Western media, in response to events, are regularly reporting on the progress of investigations, on any support and accomplices, and on countries harbouring the terrorists who perpetrated those attacks, for which Usama bin Laden is officially being held responsible.

Against that background, on 17 September 2001, a newspaper in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, *The Times*, in an article signed by Dominic Kennedy and Roger Boyes, saw fit to publish false information, alleging the existence of a cell of the bin Laden network in Côte d'Ivoire and accusing our country of harbouring a terrorist training camp.

The Ministry of State and the Ministry of the Interior and Decentralization contacted the United States through the Deputy Head of Mission at the United States Embassy, Ms. Patricia Hawkins, currently serving as Ambassador, in order to refute those unfounded insinuations, which stem purely from the imagination of the authors, and to affirm to the United States that Côte d'Ivoire is in no way, shape or form involved in those events.

The Government formally advises the national and international community that Côte d'Ivoire harbours no terrorist training camps in its territory, much less terrorists from the bin Laden network, and unequivocally denies any close or remote involvement by Côte d'Ivoire in the tragedy that has struck the United States.

(*Signed*) Emile **Boga Doudou**
Minister of State
Minister of the Interior and Decentralization

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Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 87
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East*

Rapporteur: Mr. Hans **Brattskar** (Norway)

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* In accordance with paragraph 1, section C of General Assembly resolution 54/248, this report is being submitted on 3 October 2001 following its adoption by the members of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA.

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I. Introduction

Origin and background of the Working Group

1. The Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established by the General Assembly under resolution 2656 (XXV) of 7 December 1970 to study all aspects of the financing of the Agency. In that resolution, the General Assembly requested the Working Group to assist the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General of UNRWA in reaching solutions to the problems posed by the Agency's financial crisis.

2. At the twenty-fifth session and all those that followed, the General Assembly considered the reports submitted to it by the Working Group[1] (most recently A/55/456) and adopted resolutions commending the efforts of the Working Group and requesting it to continue them for a further year (most recently resolution 55/124).[2]

3. The Working Group consists of the representatives of France, Ghana, Japan, Lebanon, Norway, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The Chairman of the Working Group is Mehmet U. Pamir (Turkey).

II. Activities of the Working Group during 2001

4. Throughout the year, the members of the Working Group have followed with concern the difficulties experienced by the Agency and, in particular, the serious financial situation it continued to face. The Working Group held two meetings, on 14 September and 3 October 2001, to consider the recent developments in the Agency's financial situation and to prepare its report to the General Assembly. The Working Group adopted its report at its meeting on 3 October 2001.

5. At an informal meeting, on 14 September 2001, the Working Group heard the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, who submitted an up-to-date report on the financial situation of the Agency. The Working Group gave further consideration to the report of the Commissioner-General at its 125th meeting, on 3 October 2001 (see chap. III below).

III. Financial situation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

6. UNRWA once again faced a critical financial situation in 2000, which has continued into the present year. In 2000, UNRWA had an income of $270.9 million, of which $256 million was for the cash portion of the regular budget and $14.9 million for the in-kind portion. These funds were received against a regular budget of $300.9 million, of which $280.4 million represented the cash portion and $20.5 million the in-kind portion, leaving a deficit of $24.4 million in the cash budget ($280.4 million minus $256 million).

7. In cash terms, the Agency ended the year 2000 with no cash for its General Fund. The $34 million in cash appearing in the Agency's financial statement for the year ended 31 December 2000 were earmarked contributions for non-regular budget activities, namely projects and the emergency appeal launched in November 2000. The Agency has dealt with deficits in the cash budgets in recent years by adopting a series of austerity measures and cost reductions coupled with the use of the Agency's working capital (the difference between assets and liabilities in the regular budget for a calendar year). In view of the above, the only reserve that UNRWA has, namely its working capital, was fully depleted in 1999, and stood at negative $4.9 million at the end of 2000. This level of working capital reserves fell far short of the minimum level of $28 million, representing average monthly expenditure, of which $17 million was for the Agency's payroll for some 22,000 area staff.

8. Since cash income in 2000 fell far short of the regular budget, the Agency was obliged to reduce expenditure to match income and could not allocate any funds towards building up the working capital or salary reserve. The adoption of the 1999 Area Staff Rules in the year 2000 led to considerable savings on area staff costs, which partly offset lost income owing to the exchange rate losses incurred in that year.

9. Repeated funding shortfalls in recent years have severely eroded the cash position of UNRWA, as

measured by the amount of cash on hand that could be used to meet basic obligations. Yet, there were still at the end of 2000 outstanding and unpaid pledges amounting to $22 million: $5 million pertaining to the regular budget and $17 million to project funding. Further strain was exerted on the cash position of UNRWA by the non-reimbursement of amounts owed to the Agency, namely $19.9 million paid by UNRWA for the value-added tax (VAT) and due for reimbursement by the Palestinian Authority and $6.1 million paid by UNRWA for port charges due from the Government of Israel. There also remained a shortfall in funding for the European Gaza Hospital, and a deficit of $5.1 million in the account set up to fund the costs of transferring UNRWA headquarters from Vienna to Gaza and Amman. That move was completed in 1996 but the budget for it remained underfunded and costs had to be met on a temporary basis from other accounts.

10. By the end of June 2001, the Agency faced the prospect of a deficit in its regular cash budget for the current year of $66 million by the end of the year. However, additional contributions from the Agency's major donors have reduced this deficit to $31 million by 25 September 2001. Income for 2001 was expected to be $280 million, against a cash budget of $311 million. Addressing an informal meeting of the Working Group in New York on 14 September 2001, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA said that, as in previous years, the Agency faced not only a budgetary deficit of $31 million, but also was concerned about a very low cash position which threatened the ability of UNRWA to meet its commitments in the remaining quarter of 2001. Of the $280 million expected income for the 2001 regular cash budget, some $65 million remained outstanding on 25 September 2001. UNRWA had hoped that the 2001 budget would be fully funded, affording an allocation towards rebuilding the Agency's working capital and allowing a modest salary increase for the Agency's 22,000 area staff, who have not had a salary increase since 1996.

11. On 25 September, at an informal meeting of the Agency's major donors and authorities hosting the refugees, held at Amman, the Commissioner-General said that, while contributions from most donors had increased in terms of their national currencies since 1995, the increases had not offset the negative impact of exchange rate fluctuations against the United States dollar, the main currency of expenditure. He noted that, in the year 2000, the Agency had lost about $11.5 million in income, mainly as a result of the devaluation of one currency, the euro, against the United States dollar. While around 60 per cent of the Agency's income is received in euros, most of the Agency's expenditure is in United States dollars or currencies with a fixed exchange rate against the United States dollar.

12. In recent years, the Agency's major donors have responded repeatedly and generously to the special appeals made by the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General for the funding of the regular and project budgets of UNRWA. Once again, in 2000 and 2001, the Commissioner-General and his colleagues have made strenuous efforts to keep donors informed, through the sharing of quarterly financial reports and the holding of regular consultations with donors and the host authorities. At the same time, the Agency continued to try to attract a reliable, sustainable flow of funds so that stopgap measures were not depended upon to meet ongoing and growing funding needs. In that context, UNRWA had appealed to donors to make payments of pledged contributions earlier in the calendar or budget years, and to ensure the payment of pledges on time.

13. Since late September 2000 and in response to the current situation of conflict and strife in the West Bank and Gaza, where around 1.45 million Palestine refugees reside, UNRWA issued several emergency appeals requesting donor contributions over and above those allocated to the Agency's regular programmes. The Agency had issued a flash appeal for $4.83 million on 4 October 2000, a first appeal for $39.1 million to cover the three-month period from December 2000 to February 2001, a second appeal for $37.1 million to cover the period from March to May 2001, and a third appeal, for $76.8 million to cover the period from June to December 2001. The Working Group welcomed the generous and prompt response by donors to the flash and first appeal at the level of $46.1 million (105 per cent). The response to the second appeal fell short of the target by $14.1 million. Contributions for the third appeal have been slower, and pledges amounted to $38.1 million on 20 September 2001. Of the total $160 million requested in the three emergency appeals issued in November 2000, February 2001 and June 2001, UNRWA has received confirmed pledges amounting to around $108 million. As was the case with the Agency's regular programme, not all pledged

amounts were received by the Agency, thus further straining its cash flow situation. The $76.8 million requested under the third emergency appeal was for food aid, medical supplies, the creation of temporary employment opportunities, physiotherapy, compensatory educational activities, psychological counselling and other humanitarian interventions. The $38 million gap between total requirements for the third appeal and amounts pledged has prevented the Agency from ordering the various food commodities needed, thus delaying several of the planned emergency food distributions in the West Bank and Gaza. The Agency's strained cash flow situation coupled with the absence of any working capital have prevented the Agency from advancing other funds towards meeting those requirements pending the receipt of donor contributions to fund those activities.

14. The Commissioner-General told the Working Group on 14 September that a new budget format adopted by the Agency for the biennium 2002-2003 had been well received by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions which subsequently recommended its approval by the General Assembly. That recommendation was also endorsed by the Agency's Advisory Commission at its meeting held on 25 September 2001.

15. The budget requirements of UNRWA for the biennium 2002-2003, estimated at $791.7 million, are to be approved by the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. Of the $791.7 million biennial allocation, $386.3 million is allocated for 2002. Of this amount, $308.8 is for the cash element of the regular budget, some $22 million for the in-kind element of the regular budget and $55.5 million for projects. Budgetary requirements for the year 2003 is $405.4 million, of which $321.1 million is for the cash portion of the regular budget, $22.9 million for the in-kind part and $61.4 million for projects. The proposed budget for the biennium 2002-2003 reflected the bare minimum funding requirements needed to sustain essential services at the current level and to cater for additional funding requirements which resulted from the integration of new programmes included by the host authorities.

16. Compared with the 2000-2001 biennium, the proposed budget reflected an overall nominal growth of 9 per cent (that is, 4.5 per cent per annum). In real terms, that represented a negative growth of 3 per cent per annum, as the Agency faced an annual growth of 3.5 per cent in its clientele population driving a similar growth in staff and financial requirements, and an annual weighted average rate of inflation in the UNRWA area of operations at 4 per cent.

IV. Concluding remarks

17. The Working Group is once again deeply concerned about the financial prospects for UNRWA; in particular after eight years of austerity measures which have eroded the level and quality of the services provided by the Agency for some 4 million Palestine refugees. The Group emphasizes that it is the responsibility of the international community to ensure the maintenance of UNRWA services at acceptable levels, in terms of quantity and quality, as defined by the needs of the refugee community, and to ensure that service levels keep pace with the steady natural growth of the refugee population.

18. The Working Group appreciates that UNRWA has made significant progress towards eliminating the structural deficit problem that plagued the Agency in the previous years, in particular through the introduction of the 1999 Area Staff Rules, reductions in international staffing and other reforms. The Group commends the Commissioner-General and all UNRWA staff for their tireless efforts to maintain the basic operations of the Agency, despite the constraints on the availability of resources that they have faced. It commends the Commissioner-General also for his fund-raising efforts and for his commitment to keeping the major donors and host authorities informed and involved, opening new avenues of support and funding and seeking a broader base of donors. The Group calls for the early and complete fulfilment of pledges and other commitments to the Agency, in particular the reimbursement of value-added tax and port charges by the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel and the payment of funds for the European Gaza Hospital and for the move of UNRWA headquarters to the area of operations. With reference to the move of UNRWA headquarters from Vienna to Gaza and Amman, the Working Group took note of the opinion of the Agency's Advisory Commission expressed in the letter dated 25 September 2001 from its Chairman to the Commissioner-General that the "amount in question should be paid to the Agency by the United Nations as soon as possible". As no additional donor contributions have been received towards the move of

UNRWA headquarters since 1996, and the Agency completed the move in accordance with instructions from United Nations Headquarters, the Working Group fully supports the view expressed by the Advisory Commission's letter to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, namely that the $5.1 million outstanding with respect to expenses incurred by the Agency on the move of its headquarters to Gaza should be paid to the Agency by the United Nations as soon as possible.

19. The Working Group expresses alarm at the continuing negative effect successive austerity measures adopted in previous years have had on the Agency's humanitarian operations. The Group noted with concern that the Agency's expenditure per refugee dropped from an average $200 per year in the 1970s to less than $70 per year in the 1990s. Successive funding shortages and subsequent austerity measures and cost reductions have prevented programmes from expanding at a rate commensurate with the growth in the refugee population, necessitated curtailments in ongoing programme activities, and precluded certain actions which would normally be part of the Agency's regular programme of work. Most seriously, these measures have led to increased class sizes in Agency schools, rising patient/staff ratios in the health services, and higher caseloads for social workers dealing with the poorest refugees.

20. While the Working Group was pleased to note the positive impact the introduction of the 1999 Areas Staff Rules has had on UNRWA staff costs, as well as the added benefit of regularizing conditions of employment for staff who had been working on temporary contracts, the Group expressed concern about the Agency's reduced attractiveness as an employer of qualified staff as a result of the reduced remuneration package offered under the 1999 Area Staff Rules.

21. The Working Group is also concerned that the continued freeze on former regular budget allocations, such as university scholarships and rehabilitation of shelters, have not only reduced the number of the Agency's activities in those areas, but made them dependent on extrabudgetary contributions. Similarly, cuts in allocations for maintenance of facilities have led to the deterioration of the Agency's extensive physical assets; and that reductions in hospitalization allocations have meant that some patients who require hospital care may be unable to receive it. The Group is gravely concerned at the impact of these measures on the lives of Palestine refugees, in particular in the areas of education and health care. The Group fears that additional austerity cuts could cause severe economic and social hardship to an already suffering refugee population, and that this would place an increased burden on the authorities hosting the refugees. The Group continues to believe that UNRWA plays a vital role in preserving the stability and security of the region, and that adequate funding of the Agency's programmes is essential to ensuring this.

22. In order to enable UNRWA to fully implement the emergency assistance to Palestine refugees in the West Bank and Gaza envisaged under the Agency's third emergency appeal, the Working Group appeals to the international community to do its utmost to meet the target of $76.8 million for the third appeal as soon as possible.

23. The Working Group agrees that the problem of the refugees is deeply rooted in a political issue which originated more than half a century ago, and that it remains essential to settle this problem once and for all in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions. The problems faced by the refugees today are, however, humanitarian ones that must be addressed as a shared international responsibility. The services provided by UNRWA must be viewed as the minimum required to enable the refugees to lead decent human lives. Any further reduction in those services would not only unfairly deprive the refugees of the minimum level of support to which they are entitled, but could also have a destabilizing effect on the entire region. Above all, the Group expresses the hope that the international support for UNRWA embodied in the resolutions adopted each year by the General Assembly, in which the Assembly recognizes the importance of the work of the Agency and requests that Governments contribute to it, should be translated into measures to ensure the survival of the Agency on a secure financial basis.

24. The Working Group therefore strongly urges all Governments to bear in mind the foregoing considerations when deciding upon the level of their contributions to UNRWA for 2002, and once again:

(a) Urges Governments that have not yet contributed to UNRWA to start to do so;

(b) Urges Governments that have so far made only relatively small contributions to increase their contributions;

(c) Urges Governments that in the past have made generous contributions to UNRWA to continue to do so in a timely manner and to strive to increase them;

(d) Urges Governments that traditionally have shown special interest in the welfare of Palestine refugees, both in the region and beyond, to begin contributing or to increase their contributions;

(e) Urges Governments to consider making special contributions sufficient to cover the deficit and build up working capital, so that UNRWA services can continue uninterrupted and the Agency can restore services cut as a result of the austerity measures, and to ensure that donor support of emergency-related and special programmes or capital projects does not in any way decrease or divert contributions to the Agency's regular programme.

Notes

[1] For the consideration of the most recent report of the Working Group (A/55/456), see A/55/570.

[2] The most recent resolution being General Assembly resolution 55/124.